

B X
P61
F5

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

FORCE COLLECTION.]

Chop. BX 9861
Shelf .C3F5

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



}

C. Ripley's

PAROCHIAL CONTROVERSY.

CONTROVERSY

BETWEEN

THE FIRST PARISH IN CAMBRIDGE

AND

THE REV. DR. HOLMES,

THEIR LATE PASTOR.

PUBLISHED BY THE PARISH COMMITTEE.



67

F CAMBRIDGE:

PRINTED BY E. W. METCALF AND COMPANY.

1829.

BX9861
C3F5

P R E F A C E.

THE controversy between the First Parish in Cambridge and the Rev. Dr. Abiel Holmes, their late pastor, in relation to his conduct in that office, being important in its character and consequences, has attracted great attention, and excited a very extensive and lively interest in the community. The civil and religious rights, involved in this controversy, are invaluable ; and both reason and religion require them to be preserved inviolate. The invasion or infringement of those rights, is a transgression of moral and religious principles, and one of the greatest injuries to rational beings. Our wise, free, and independent government, grants and secures civil and religious liberty to all its subjects, and, while it recognises the existence of a **PLURALITY OF SECTS, OR DENOMINATIONS OF CHRISTIANS**, standing on the basis of equality ; it prohibits all laws, which would produce a subordination of one of them to another. Notwithstanding an *exclusive spirit in religion* is opposed to reason, to the true *spirit of Christianity*, and to the fundamental principles of the Constitution of this Commonwealth, and has a direct and powerful tendency to produce *error, bigotry, superstition, intolerance, and persecution*, with all their pernicious, terrific, and destructive consequences, yet the operations of that *exclusive spirit* have, within a few years, spread their effects so widely, even among the enlightened people of New England, that the *ecclesiastical affairs of many other Parishes* are very similar to those of this Parish ; and, from that cause, their sympathies with us have arisen, and numerous inquiries have been made concerning our proceedings, and the effects produced by them. Although not desirous of gratifying curiosity, and not solicitous to influence public opinion, we have hitherto uniformly felt a perfect willingness to have all the facts universally known.

A narration of the facts is unnecessary here, as they will appear from the perusal of the following pamphlet; but it may be expedient to mention a small number of facts, which may be useful in connexion with those which, in strictness, belong to the controversy. The two predecessors of Dr. Holmes, as pastors of this Parish, were the Rev. Dr. Appleton and the Rev. Mr. Hilliard. Dr. Appleton was ordained in this Parish Oct. 9, 1717, and died Feb. 9, 1784. Mr. Hilliard was installed, as colleague to Dr. Appleton, Oct. 27, 1783, and died May 9, 1790. Dr. Holmes was installed in this Parish January 25, 1792.

The numerous papers and statements by the memorialists and by the Parish, will show the *causes, origin, and progress* of the controversy to this time. The *causes of complaint* by the Parish against Dr. Holmes are formally and fully stated in the *complaint* before the *ex parte Ecclesiastical Council*, one of which causes is the following: Dr. Holmes, within the last three years, by his adoption of the *Calvinistic exclusive system*, in relation to *pastoral exchanges*, contrary to his former practice for more than thirty years, and to the practice of the above named predecessors, in our opinion, had violated our invaluable rights, as men, as Christians, and as the subjects of a government, founded on the principles of civil and religious freedom. We have demanded a restoration of those rights; and, in the means used by us to recover them, we have endeavoured to think and act with *candor, moderation, and Christian charity*, but with *independence and unfailing perseverance*. A review of our arguments, addressed to Dr. Holmes, and of our proceedings, as individuals and as a Parish, in relation to him, convinces us, that we have done right, and leads us to anticipate the approbation of all wise and impartial persons, who shall fully understand the facts and principles, included in the controversy. It was not our intention, or wish, to publish a history of this controversy, at this time; but *Dr. Holmes' church, as they should be called, HAVE COMPELLED US TO DO IT, IN SELF-DEFENCE*. About the end of July last, a pamphlet, entitled, "An Account of the Controversy in the First Parish in Cambridge, 1827—1829," and purporting to be "published, pursuant to a vote of the church," made its *first appearance* in Cambridge. It excited some surprise, as no previous intimation had been made to us, that such a publication was intended. On an examination of the "Account," &c. it was

found to be a very imperfect, partial, mutilated, false, and deceptive statement of the facts, principles, and arguments included in the controversy, and to contain many uncharitable, satirical, and sophistical comments and notes, and *entire copies* of the numerous papers addressed by Dr. Holmes to the memorialists and the Parish, or their Committee, but *mutilations* and *misrepresentations* of the writings sent by them to Dr. Holmes.

The majority of the parishioners were convinced, that the "Account" &c., both by its deficiencies and misrepresentations, was adapted to produce and propagate many, and great errors and prejudices, in relation to the controversy, and that it might prove injurious to their rights and reputation, unless seasonably corrected, and the deceptive and pernicious tendency of it counteracted. Under these circumstances, they considered it an imperious duty to the Parish, to the Council, and to the cause of religion and virtue, to publish the following pamphlet. The Committee do not arrogate to themselves infallibility, or perfection; but they have endeavoured, by careful attention, and no small degree of industry, to make the following publication complete and accurate in all its parts, as to the facts, principles, and arguments, included in the controversy, that those who read it with care, candor, and impartiality, may be able to form a right judgment. They have attempted to publish true copies of all the writings to and from Dr. Holmes, and of all the votes of the Parish, and of all remonstrances by Dr. Holmes, by the minority of the parishioners, and majority of the church, and of every writing relating to the controversy, and have not allowed themselves the dangerous liberty of abridging, making abstracts, stating the substance, &c. according to the example of the publishers of the "Account," &c. A book, perfectly free from errors has seldom appeared in the world; and it is not improbable, that some of inconsiderable magnitude may be found in the following pamphlet; but it is hoped, if there are any, that they will not alter any part of the substance or merits of the case.

The First Parish in Cambridge, confiding in the rectitude of their cause, do not solicit sympathy, nor wish to excite passion or prejudice; but their intention is to address the understandings of the wise, impartial, and just, and the dispassionate and unbiased judgment of an enlightened and investigating community.

Those who are prepared to decide a case *before they know any thing correctly concerning it*, or, if they have any knowledge of it, are determined to decide it, *not according to the facts and the rules of right*, but *in conformity to their own interest, prejudices, passions, party-spirit, erroneous theories, or misguided zeal, &c.* WE DO NOT REQUEST, or ADVISE to read this publication, which is intended, and we believe adapted, to give a full and correct knowledge of this controversy, and will, therefore, *increase the difficulty of deciding it*, according to inclination, interest, party-spirit, &c. Such persons will find *a partial decision greatly facilitated by confining themselves to the "Account" by "the church,"* which is, with uncommon ability, adapted to *that kind of decision.*

ABRAHAM HILLIARD,
ABEL WHITNEY,
JOSEPH HOLMES,
FRANCIS DANA,
WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
SYLVANUS PLYMPTON,
JOB WYETH.

*Committee
of
said Parish.*

First Parish in Cambridge, August 20, 1829.

CONTROVERSY.

MEMORIAL OF SUNDRY INHABITANTS OF THE FIRST PARISH IN CAMBRIDGE, AND LEGAL VOTERS THEREIN, TO THE REV. ABIEL HOLMES, D. D.

To the Rev. Dr. Holmes, Pastor of the First Church in Cambridge.

SIR,—The undersigned, members of the Church and Society of which you are Pastor and Teacher, beg leave, very respectfully, to address you on a subject of much moment. To this they are induced by a sense of justice to their own religious views and principles, and by motives of friendly and affectionate regard to you, as their Teacher, in reference to the peace and order of the Church and Society, and to the influence which will attend your professional services.

The order, peace, and harmony, with which your Church and Society have walked together for the long period of thirty-five years are matter of grateful recollection to those of your subscribers, who have, from your introduction to them until the present time, listened to your instructions, and are alike honorable to you, and to those who have attended your ministrations at the altar.

Your memorialists feel that this state of things is giving way to disaffection and disunion, and that there is reason to fear the commencement of a state of feeling, the end of which they know not, hostile to the harmony of your Society, and, in any view, seriously to be deprecated.

With these apprehensions, your memorialists feel it their duty, as lovers of peace, as friends to their Pastor, as humble wishers for the prevalence of the Christian virtues, to make known to you their fears, and to suggest to you what, in their belief, will avert present, and prevent anticipated evils.

We are confident that some differences in theory between you and us will not prevent the exercise of mutual charity and friendship. We candidly state to you, Sir, that we are conscientiously and firmly attached to a system of religious principles, more liberal, and we sincerely believe more rational and scriptural, than those which have for a few years last past been delivered to us by that class of preachers, whom you have invited to your pulpit.

Liberty of conscience is an invaluable and inalienable right, which each individual possesses, and should wish and determine to preserve inviolate; and it will become the indispensable duty of each to resist every attempt to infringe that right, or to deprive him of the unmolested enjoyment of the free operation of his moral powers. While we claim for ourselves the enjoyment of this right, we are not unmindful of your equal claim to its equal enjoyment; and we disclaim any right or wish to dictate to you in regard to your own religious sentiments. Actuated by friendly, affectionate, and christian regard to you, we should be most unwilling to wound your sensibility, or to interfere with your convictions of duty or rights of conscience. We, nevertheless, feel it consistent with the respect due to you, as a minister of the gospel, and the affection we bear you as a Christian and a man, to invite your serious consideration of this memorial, which a sense of duty has called forth.

The evils we fear are, a diminution of the numbers of your Church and Society, and the introduction of disagreement and disunion among those who constitute them. Several persons have already left your parish, because they could not hear, from those preachers, with whom you have, of late, exclusively exchanged, such religious discourses as they could approve, or omit to condemn;

and divers others declare that they shall leave your society, unless they can hear in your meetinghouse, ministers of more liberal sentiments than those above-mentioned.

These evils, we apprehend, may be prevented by a recurrence to your former practice of occasionally inviting to your desk ministers of the gospel, who are designated as Christians of liberal religious sentiments. We are satisfied that a large majority of the members of the First Parish in Cambridge have ever listened to those of this class, whom you formerly invited to co-operate with you in religious services, with respect, with pleasure, and with advantage, and would gladly continue to profit by their instructions.

It was some time since heard by us, with regret, that it had become your determination no longer to seek or permit their introduction to your pulpit. We were slow to believe that ministers of the gospel, respected for their talents, their purity of life, and engagedness in the common cause of Christianity, with whom you had been for *more than thirty years* in the practice of exchanging in labors of love, were henceforth to be considered as unworthy or unprofitable fellow-workers, and debarred from further labors in this part of Christ's vineyard.

With these suggestions, and with these views, we have been attentive and anxious observers of the progress of things in your Society, and we much regret that from this inspection we are constrained to declare our fears that such had become your opinion.

Convinced that this determination, if it exist, and be pursued, will be productive of much unhappiness and division in a Church and Society, which have heretofore lived in harmony and christian fellowship, and will essentially affect your influence and usefulness as Pastor and Teacher, the subscribers, impelled by duty, and influenced by the desire of promoting the happiness and the best interests of you and your parishioners, join in recommending to you a return to that liberal system of professional exchanges, which you formerly practised; and in requesting you to exchange a reasonable proportion of the time with such respectable clergymen of liberal sentiments in this vicinity, as have heretofore been admitted into your pulpit, and with others of similar character, for the purpose of removing the dissatisfaction, which now prevails among the members of your Church and Congregation, and of preventing the evils to which we have above alluded.

Cambridge, July 9th, 1827.

This memorial, bearing date July 9th, 1827, was signed by Israel Porter and sixty-two others, and presented to Dr. Holmes, on the 20th of the same month, by a committee of the memorialists appointed for that purpose. It was also seen, examined, and approved, by six other members of the Parish, whose names and approval were reported to Dr. Holmes by said committee.*

* On page 4, of the pamphlet, entitled "An Account of the Controversy in the First Parish in Cambridge : 1827—1829," it is stated, "The first notice of dissatisfaction with the ministry, or of disaffection to the minister of the parish, was expressed in a memorial, signed by a considerable number of the parishioners, dated July 9, 1827, and presented to the pastor, on the 20th of the same month."

Dr. Holmes adopted the exclusive system, in relation to pastoral exchanges, without consulting his parishioners, and without giving them any notice of his intention to exclude ministers of the liberal denomination from our pulpit. The parishioners, when they first observed the change in his practice, supposed that it depended on his personal convenience, at the time, and almost two years' observation was necessary to convince them, that Dr. Holmes, contrary to his own practice for more than thirty years of his ministry in this parish, and to the practice of his predecessors, the Rev. Mr. Hilliard, and Rev. Dr. Appleton, had determined to pursue the arrogant and uncharitable system of exclusion.

It will be perceived from Dr. Holmes' papers, addressed to the parishioners and parish, that he, during a considerable period after the memorial was presented to him, endeavored to conceal his determination to adhere to that system, and that he finally very reluctantly acknowledged his resolution not to exchange, in future, with such liberal preachers, as he had before invited to our pulpit.

Within a short time after the parishioners were convinced by observation and

ANSWER OF REV. DR. HOLMES TO THE FOREGOING MEMORIAL.

Answer to a Memorial, signed by Israel Porter and others, presented to me on the 20th July, 1827.

BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

I HAVE attended to your memorial with the thought and care, which my regard to its subscribers and the importance of the subject required; and "for this cause have bowed my knees to God" for light and guidance. Conscious of having sought the peace, as well as the religious improvement and salvation of the Church and People of my pastoral charge, during a ministry of thirty-five years; and equally conscious, that there is no change either in my desire or aim, still to promote their peace and welfare, I could not but feel concern at an occurrence which seemed to have an unfavorable aspect upon both. On receiving the first notice of the circulation of a memorial, I thought, and I still think, that an interview with your pastor, before any paper had been drawn up, and names solicited for it, would have been more favorable to truth and peace. It might have prevented one mistake, at least, in your memorial, which, with the remark subjoined to it, is adapted to excite an unkindly influence. The passage I refer to, is what, you say, "was sometime since heard by you, with regret, that it had become my determination no longer to seek or permit the introduction of ministers, designated as Christians of liberal religious sentiments, to my pulpit." *Such a determination I never uttered; and the remark subjoined, concerning the light in which such ministers "were henceforth to be considered," I never made.*

If the object of the memorial is, to introduce principles greatly at variance with those of your own minister, in the ministrations of the sanctuary; you will indulge me in candidly presenting to you the difficulties and dangers, that would be apprehended from so diversified and indefinite a course of public service.

There are ministers designated as liberal, who are decidedly of the opinion, that an exchange with ministers of the original principles of the New England Churches, is not advisable. Such exchanges have been sometimes found unacceptable and injurious. Exception has been taken to a discourse, delivered by a minister of pre-eminent character for theological learning and talents, orthodoxy and charity, on an exchange with a minister denominated liberal; and the preacher has been interrogated upon the subject in the broad aisle, before he had left the church, in which he had performed the service.

Ministers and Churches denominated liberal, no less than those of most other denominations, appear to consider it neither useful nor expedient to have very

inquiry, that Dr. Holmes had resolved to confine his exchanges to Calvinists, said memorial was addressed to him, for the purpose of recalling him to his former practice, and of inducing him to remedy the complaints, which he had caused by his Innovations in his pastoral conduct.

Dr. Holmes *had notice*, that a majority of his parishioners were Unitarians, and were dissatisfied with his Calvinistic and Trinitarian tenets and preaching, a considerable period before said memorial was written. This fact admits of very easy and conclusive proof. Some votes of his Church, previous to the memorial, should have convinced Dr. Holmes, that there was not a perfect harmony between him and his Church, in their theories and feelings, in relation to liberal preachers and to exclusive practice. The votes of the church, in reference to the respective ordinations of the Rev. Mr. Gannett and the Rev. Mr. Pierpont of Boston, are, undoubtedly, deeply impressed on Dr. Holmes' memory. Dr. Holmes probably recollects, that his church voted to join in each of those ordinations, and attended by its delegates. The above mentioned "considerable number" of signers, was sixty-three, and six other very respectable parishioners examined said memorial and approved the statements and principles therein, and their names were reported to Dr. Holmes by the Committee, who presented the memorial, making the whole number **SIXTY-NINE**; a number at least twice as large as the greatest number of voters of the minority, and three times as large as their average number of voters, at the parish meetings mentioned in this volume.

diverse and opposite doctrines delivered to those who compose their stated religious assemblies. The subject is believed to be uniformly left to the discretion of the pastors, *who are, or ought to be, the best judges of what is profitable for their hearers*, and who, as having a high personal responsibility, are bound religiously to determine what is right and consistent for themselves.

Precedents, whether in civil or ecclesiastical concerns, are no farther obligatory, than the cases and circumstances are the same, or so similar as to present a fair evidence of an obligation to regard them. The religious principles, now avowed by many churches and ministers, it is well known, are essentially, or very widely, different from those which were held by the same churches and their ministers, thirty years ago; and this difference has become more strikingly apparent, within the last few years.

Ministers and churches, of both these descriptions, may believe, that an interchange of public services, where the principles are known, or believed to be, greatly at variance, would be generally unprofitable, often dangerous, and, not unfrequently, injurious. The pulpit, it might be feared, would become a place of controversy, or of such diversity of doctrine, as would tend to produce, either skepticism, or an indifference to all religion.

The responsibility of a minister extends to his entire ministry. Men of the legal profession know it to be a maxim in Law, "He that does by another, does by himself." It is alike true in the Gospel. Were a minister to be knowingly and willingly instrumental to the introduction of religious principles which he believes to be dangerous to the souls of his people;—should any thus perish by his means, their blood would be required at his hand.

The principles upon which *this Chnrch and Congregation* were originally settled, and which have been uniformly maintained, are essentially the same as those of the first churches of New England; and these are the principles which I held and taught, at the time of my settlement here, and which I have never found reason to alter.

With these views and convictions of truth and duty, I persuade myself that you will consider my reply with the same candor, with which I have endeavored to consider your memorial; and that you will allow your minister the same liberty of conscience, which he allows you. This persuasion you authorize me to feel, by the respectful, kind, and friendly style and manner of your address, and by the assurance you give me, that you "disclaim any right or wish to dictate to me in regard to my own religious sentiments," and that you are "actuated by friendly, affectionate, and Christian regard" to me, and "should be most unwilling to wound my sensibility, or to interfere with my convictions of duty, or rights of conscience."

This first adverse occurrence, of serious moment, in my ministry, reminds me of my ordination vows. These "vows are upon me," and it will be my endeavor to perform them. It will be my desire and aim, "to love the truth and peace," and to be assiduous to preserve both among the people of my pastoral care; to "speak the truth in love," and to prove myself faithful to my divine Master, and to you; "for we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

I am, Brethren and Friends, your affectionate Pastor,

A. HOLMES.*

Cambridge, 28th July, 1827.

The above answer of Dr. Holmes, having been examined by the memorialists, they adopted the following REPLY thereto, which was presented to him by their committee, on the 2d of October, 1827.

* The foregoing papers, and all other correspondence between Dr. Holmes and the Parishioners previously to the 29th of March, A. D. 1828, were read to the Parish at a meeting holden on that day—and by vote ordered to be filed, as will appear by the record of said meeting.

To the Rev. Dr. Holmes, Pastor of the First Church in Cambridge.

SIR,—When we recently transmitted to you our memorial, we presumed that you would readily be convinced, that the request contained in it was reasonable, charitable, and just, and that your compliance with it had become necessary, as the best measure which you could possibly adopt, to produce, promote, and preserve harmony, moral and religious improvement, prosperity, and happiness in this parish. We believed, that the information given you in that memorial, would induce you, without delay, to remedy the evils therein complained of, and to use your best exertions to give satisfaction to the memorialists.

After receiving your communication to us, in answer to our memorial, we met, heard, and fully considered your communication, and, after a candid and critical examination of it, we feel ourselves under the necessity of stating to you, that it appears to us, in several parts of it, ambiguous, and, in others, liable to great and strong objections; that, instead of making us acquainted with your decision, in relation to the request in our memorial, it leaves us in great doubt as to your determination. We anticipated a clear and satisfactory answer on the important subject of our memorial, and presumed, that our request would be granted without hesitation. The doubt and dissatisfaction produced by your paper, render it expedient that we should state to you clearly and fully our doubts and objections, that you may understand our views and intentions, and have a fair opportunity to remove those doubts, and answer those objections.

It is undoubtedly true, that there is a difference between you, Sir, and a majority of your parishioners, in some important religious theories, and this difference, in a great degree, is coeval with your ordination in this parish.* It appears

* On pages 6 and 7 of the above-mentioned "Account of the Controversy," &c. is a note in the following words, *to wit*, "How such a difference, never before heard of by the pastor or the oldest of his parishioners, is consistent with the unequivocal testimony, given in the first memorial to 'the order, peace, and harmony with which your church and society have walked together for the long period of thirty-five years,' as 'matter of grateful recollection to those of your subscribers, who have from the time of your introduction to them until the present time listened to your instructions,' &c. is not perceived. Had such a difference been coeval with the pastor's settlement in this parish, it would seem strange, that he continued here for a single year; and even his settlement, singularly harmonious as it was, would appear unaccountable."

The parishioners can produce conclusive evidence to prove, that Dr Holmes and many of his parishioners had heard of the difference therein mentioned, a considerable time before the first memorial. A large majority of the parishioners, from the time of the Rev. Mr. Hilliard to the present time, have been liberal in their religious theories. Mr. Hilliard, in his theological theories and in his pastoral practice, was one of the most catholic ministers in his day. He was perfectly anti-calvinistic and Unitarian in his theology, and enjoyed great harmony with his church and parish. Dr. Holmes' probationary period, as a candidate in the parish, was very short, and his distinguishing tenets were not understood by a majority of the parishioners. The Council which ordained Dr. Holmes was liberal, with the exception of only one member. Dr. Holmes, before his adoption of the exclusive system, generally preached practical sermons, to which rational theologians would not object. His doctrinal sermons were few. His peculiar style of writing sermons, in scriptural phraseology, did not clearly indicate his distinguishing tenets; and generally his parishioners, after hearing his doctrinal sermons, had not the means of knowing definitely how far Dr. Holmes harmonized with the Calvinistic creed. Dr Holmes exchanged liberally and impartially with almost all the liberal Congregational ministers within 12 or 15 miles of Cambridge, and often invited the candidates, resident in Cambridge, to preach for him; so that a great proportion of the preaching in the parish was rational, and satisfactory to the parishioners. Under these circumstances, the majority of the parishioners, who had nothing of the exclusive character in their religion, had no cause for public complaint, or for interrupting harmony with Dr. Holmes or his church. Before the commencement of the present controversy, the church had not opposed the parish, nor arrogated the right to govern the parish, in relation to moral and religious instruction. Had the majority of the parishioners been

to us extremely improbable, that this difference in theory will be diminished, as we have heard you, and those who agree with you, or who appear to be approved by you, advocate the theories to which we are opposed, without feeling the least inclination to alter our own religious opinions, relating to the subjects on which we differ.

Great and numerous disadvantages, in a moral and religious view, must result from a decided difference and constant conflict of theory between a preacher and his hearers. When parishioners assemble for public worship, if there be a great conflict of principle between them and their preacher, devotion is prevented, or interrupted, and their minds are less engaged in devotional exercises, than in efforts to support their own theories, and to disprove those which they hear from the pulpit. If the preacher and his auditors are much opposed to each other in their theology, they cannot harmonize with him in public worship, while he is constantly delivering and laboring to establish opinions, which they fully believe to be contradictory to reason, or revelation, or to one another; and their minds are gradually alienated from him, and they either neglect attendance on the public exercises of religion, or seek some other moral and religious instructor, with whom they find it practicable to agree.

We have been accustomed, Sir, to view your character with great respect, to feel and cultivate a sincere friendship for you, as a man and a Christian, and to consider you as a friend to us and your Parish. You profess your desire, or aim, still to promote the peace and welfare of the church and people of your pastoral charge. If you are desirous of promoting peace, harmony, and religious improvement among your parishioners, as you undoubtedly are, it is to be presumed, that you will manifest that desire by using practicable means for those purposes, and by avoiding the use of means which destroy peace and harmony, produce discord and conflict, prevent religious improvement, drive members of the Parish from their lawful and regular place of public worship, threaten a great diminution of the number of your religious society, and to annihilate its prosperity and respectability. You express the opinion, that a personal interview with you "would have been more favorable to truth and peace;" than the circulation of our memorial, and the soliciting of names for it; and you say, that such interview "might have prevented one mistake, at least, in our memorial."

We would ask, What possible use could there have been in such an interview; what advantage could we have derived from it, when the written statement and request of a majority of the parishioners have hitherto produced from you nothing, in theory or practice, which indicates an inclination in you to comply with that request?

You say, Sir, that the above-mentioned supposed mistake, with the remark subjoined to it, in our memorial, "is adapted to excite an unkindly influence." The part of your answer in which you inform us what that mistake is, and in which you make some observations relating to it, is in the following words, *to wit*, "The passage I refer to is what you say 'was some time since heard by you with regret; that it had become my determination no longer to seek, or permit, the introduction of ministers, designated as Christians of liberal religious sentiments, to my pulpit; ' such a determination *I never uttered*; and the remark subjoined, concerning the light in which such ministers 'were henceforth to be considered,' *I never made*."

We are confident that there is not, in our memorial, any such mistake as you suppose. If you had examined the passage, to which you refer in the words above cited from your answer, and had determined the meaning of it according to the rules of grammar, or of fair construction, you would probably have been fully convinced, that there is no such mistake, as you suppose, in our memorial; and would have made an answer to that passage very different from the one above-mentioned.

To exhibit to you our meaning in said passage, and to convince you that there is no mistake in it, and to show you why we are dissatisfied with your answer, so far as it relates to that passage, we submit to you the following observations.

very similar, in their religious theories and practice, to their opponents, Dr. Holmes might not have continued in the parish "for a single year." This statement may possibly explain the wonder attempted to be created in the above note.

Your deviation from your former practice of liberal exchanges, which had been continued more than thirty years, and your general exclusion of liberal preachers from our pulpit, for the few years last past, had produced, not only a general suspicion, but a full conviction, in the minds of many of the parishioners, that you had made the determination above-mentioned, and that suspicion and conviction excited considerable conversation among the parishioners, and often produced the observation, that you had made such determination; which certainly was a fair conclusion from your actions, and your conduct rendered words unimportant. In your answer, you do not deny that *determination*, but merely the *uttering* of it; you do not deny, that you considered liberal ministers *in the light* mentioned in the memorial, but that you never *remarked* it.

That you may understand our memorial, and give to it that weight which it has in the balance of wisdom, it is important that you should know, whether it is the result of undue solicitation, or of a fair expression of the principles, taste, and desires of the memorialists.

We are convinced, that no one memorialist was solicited to change his principles, taste, or desires; but, when careful inquiry had ascertained, that a parishioner agreed in the principles, taste, and desires expressed in the memorial, that he was asked, and, if you please, solicited, once, or several times, by signing the memorial, to inform you of the truth in relation to himself. The difference between some of your religious theories and those of the memorialists is real, sincere, and deep-rooted; it has existed many years; and there is the highest probability that it will continue, and great reason, from present appearances, to believe, that, instead of diminishing, it will increase, especially if your theories and practice hereafter should be more rigid than they were the first thirty years of your ministry here. If you suppose, Sir, that our memorial is not true, or well founded, you are in a great error, which may be productive of many consequences extremely unfavorable, not only to the peace, harmony, and prosperity of this parish, but to its respectability and happiness. The memorialists are not disorganizers, but they are the majority of your parish, laboring, and determined to labor, for its temporal and spiritual good.

In relation to "the original principles of the New-England churches," we find that there is some uncertainty and doubt. On the question, What were those principles? ministers of the gospel, much distinguished for their talents, theological learning, and piety, differ materially from one another: and some of them say, that the church in this parish does not conform to those principles. The decision of that question does not appear to us very important. From the exercise of our reason, and the examination of the sacred Scriptures, we have derived our own moral and religious principles, which we sincerely much prefer to "the original principles of the New-England churches," as those principles are usually stated and understood, or to any other principles, which, in our opinion, are not supported by reason and Scripture.

We have no interest in knowing the opinions, taste, and practice of some ministers, mentioned by you, as opposed to exchanges with ministers of the liberal denomination. If they entertain the principles and feelings, which you attribute to them, ours are decidedly different, and we wish that to be understood by you and all concerned.

In relation to the exchanges, requested by us, we did not intend to involve you in difficulties, to subject you to hardships, or to ask for any thing unreasonable. We have ascertained, that there is an adequate number of respectable, unexceptionable, liberal ministers, within a convenient distance of your meeting-house, who are willing to exchange with you, on reasonable and fair terms of equality, or in the usual way, without making any difficulty on their part; the exchanges, therefore, which we wish, and to which we think there can be no valid objection, can be effectuated without difficulty, unless it be produced on your part. But we apprehend, that, if the suppositions in your answer are correct, and the difficulties there alluded to, real, those difficulties are small, in comparison with the difficulties which must result from a constant and long-continued opposition and contention, in relation to some important theories and some parts of practice, between a minister and his parishioners, or between them and those whom he invites to preach.

The parishioners are the legal electors of a minister, and his only supporters. It is very certain, when they elect and settle a minister, that they never intend to submit to his control their principles and their taste, and to authorize and

empower him to decide what they shall, or shall not, hear. Although a minister may think himself "the best judge of what is profitable for his hearers;" yet his parishioners, feeling responsible not to any human being, but to God alone for their religious principles and taste, and for the exercise of their consciences, will never permit their minister, in the exercise of his judgment, to lord it over their consciences, and to violate their principles and taste, if it be practicable, by any means within their power, and consistent with good principles and good policy, to prevent it. It is the duty of parishioners to be charitable, to inquire freely and perseveringly, to hear impartially, and to judge soundly, for the purpose of ascertaining the truth, and extending their knowledge. So far as great numbers of ministers, distinguished for their talents, learning, moral virtues, and piety, differ from one another, on important religious subjects and theories, the memorialists are desirous of hearing those subjects and theories fully, freely, and dispassionately discussed, by the most able of those ministers belonging to the several denominations heretofore admitted into our pulpit, that they may know the whole of those subjects, and all the facts and arguments relating thereto, and may consider them fully, before making their ultimate decision. Numerous theories and opinions, which were formerly believed by ministers and vast multitudes of Christians to be certainly right, are now universally considered erroneous, and rejected by all Christians not subject to ecclesiastical despotism. Such freedom in inquiry and hearing, produced the reformation from popery, and has, since that reformation, corrected thousands of errors and many gross superstitions, which corrupted, degraded, and disgraced Christianity, and has caused the general Christian illumination, exhibited by the Christians of the present age. Without such freedom, the reformation would never have been effected; and where it is not enjoyed and exercised, the grossest errors and worst superstitions may be, and are likely to be, perpetuated. Should we permit our minister to assume a guardianship over us, and to determine that we shall not hear those theories, which are most agreeable to our principles and taste, and; in our opinion, best supported by reason and Scripture, and that we shall spend our sabbaths in attending to theories which we do not believe, and cannot omit to condemn, we should no longer enjoy religious freedom, but be degraded to a most humble condition. It is to be hoped, that the subjects of a government which secures to them the highest degree of civil and religious freedom any where enjoyed, will never consider the theory of any human being infallible, or view it with such extreme reverence, or superstitious awe, as will prevent free and impartial inquiry, and critical and persevering investigation ; that they will never permit any one to infringe their liberty of conscience, or to tyrannize over their understandings, or to erect any barrier to stop them in their free and sincere endeavors to investigate, impartially and fully, every important moral and religious subject, which may attract their attention, and be within the reach of their intellectual powers. Truth is so far from fearing or prohibiting free inquiry, or candid and charitable hearing, that it requires, encourages, and approves unrestrained and perfect investigation, and is always confident of a complete triumph over falsehood, error, and superstition. We are the keepers of our own consciences and intellects, responsible to God only for the cultivation and exercise of them, bound to improve them in the highest degree, and to exert them in the best manner, of which we are capable. If our minister, or any other person should request us not to hear, or prohibit our hearing, what we believe would contribute to our intellectual, moral, and religious improvement, and to our happiness, it would be criminal in us to comply with such request, or to regard such prohibition.

The rule, stated by you, in relation to precedents, is undoubtedly correct ; but we think, that no change has taken place in the religious theories, or character, of the liberal ministers, within your former limits for exchanges, which requires or warrants a deviation from your practice during the first thirty years of your ministry in this parish ; and we are, therefore, far from believing that there is any thing to diminish the force of your practice as a precedent. It appears to us that the clergy of your denomination have, within the last thirty years, altered their theological theories, at least as much as the clergy, usually denominated liberal, have theirs. But, in considering and discussing the present question, it is unimportant and wholly immaterial, whether preachers of your denomination, or the liberal preachers have changed most; for we state to you our principles, taste, and desires, and request you, in conformity to your former practice, to

adapt your exchanges, in some degree, to them ; and let the question as to changes in religious theories, in relation to you, to them, or to us, be settled as it may, the decision will produce no change in our present principles, taste, and desires ; and we cannot be satisfied with any history of changes in theory, or by any claim of pre-eminence by one denomination of Christians over another, or with any thing short of your complying with the request which we thought it our duty to make in our memorial.

A full and free exertion of the human mind has a natural and powerful tendency to increase all kinds of valuable knowledge, to extend the empire of truth, to elevate the standard of morals and religion, to multiply and greatly augment the enjoyments of man ; and has, generally, from the origin of the world to the present time, produced these effects. Such exertion, instead of tending to produce "skepticism," or "indifference to all religion," will generally impress truth deeply and permanently on the mind, and excite all that reverence and zeal for true religion, which its infinite importance demands. When the mind is fettered and enslaved, and not permitted to examine moral and religious subjects critically, and to hear them fully discussed, error, falsehood, and absurdity arise and are propagated ; morals and religion are corrupted and degraded, and thereby rendered the objects of indifference, disbelief, and aversion.

It is dangerous, if not criminal, to shut the intellectual eye against the light of science. No one has hitherto reached the summit of knowledge, or the perfection of wisdom. There never has been a time, when it was safe, proper, or wise, to prohibit or stop further inquiry and investigation, on those subjects, which are confined within the limits of probability, and do not admit of demonstration. Some have imagined their knowledge perfect, and attempted to prevent further inquiry among their pupils, disciples, or followers ; but their successors have easily detected and exposed the imperfection of that knowledge, corrected the errors mixed with it, and have either made great additions to it, or sometimes entirely rejected it. A candid, charitable mind, which sincerely loves true knowledge, will pursue it with ardor and perseverance, and will never be so far satisfied with its intellectual acquirements, as to fear, avoid, or reject the means of information. Such a mind will "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."

You speak, Sir, of the principles upon which this church and congregation were originally settled. Concerning these principles we have made satisfactory inquiry, and are convinced, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the principles of your predecessor, and of his predecessor, were liberal, and far more rational and scriptural, than the theories of the preachers to whom you have, of late, confined your exchanges. We therefore suspect, that the opinion expressed by you, on this subject, is erroneous. But let the principles upon which this church and congregation were originally settled be as they may, they are immaterial in this case. We have our own moral and religious principles and taste, derived, as we believe, from reason and scripture,—much higher sources of information for the regulation of faith and practice, than the theories and actions of our predecessors, or fathers. Our forefathers rejected the principles of their predecessors, and made great and persevering efforts to bring them into contempt ; and we find ourselves, by the extension of knowledge, compelled to believe many of the theories, and no inconsiderable number of the actions of our forefathers wrong, and to reject them.

When we assure you, Sir, that we are sincere friends to you, and desirous of demonstrating our friendship to you by our conduct, we would state to you, that we cannot surrender our rights, or permit them to be violated. Liberty of conscience is invaluable and inalienable ; and both reason and revelation require us to preserve that liberty inviolate. If a person were in a state of perfect solitude, the exercise of this liberty would be confined to himself, and could not infringe the rights of others. But in society, each one is bound to confine the operations of his conscience so far as not to deprive others of their equal liberty of conscience. Each one may decide questions of conscience for himself, but not for others. By allowing you liberty of conscience, we do not intend to annihilate our own, or to permit you, in any way, or under any pretext whatever, to deprive us of it. If your liberty of conscience is the right of deciding, not only for yourself, but for us also, questions relating to morality and religion, in which we have a common and equal interest with you, your liberty of conscience, in that view of it, destroys ours ; and the only liberty remaining to us is that of abandoning the religious society

of which we are members, of leaving the meeting-house, which is our regular and legal place of public worship, and of experiencing a kind of exile, in order to hear what we believe and what is necessary to satisfy our minds. It ought not to be in the power of a minister, or of a minority of the parishioners, to drive the majority from the parish to which they belong, or to exercise an unreasonable control over them as to the preaching in the pulpit of that parish.

Sir, the subjects on which we address you are very important, and deserve the most candid, serious, and careful consideration. We are lovers of good order, peace, and harmony; and while we are endeavoring to promote and preserve them, we should be extremely unwilling to excite disaffection and discord, or to do any thing injurious to you, or your Parish. While duty impels us to state and advocate our principles, and to assert our rights with boldness and independence, we are solicitous to preserve and exhibit our respect and friendship for you. We cannot conscientiously forbear to attract your mind to a further consideration of the request in our memorial, as we feel a deep conviction, that your compliance with it would be productive of very great and lasting temporal as well as moral and religious good to this parish. Every human being is liable to err. However great the differences between you and us, in moral and religious theories, we have a perfect confidence in the rectitude of your intentions. We hope, Sir, that your further examination of the subjects above submitted to you will produce, in your mind, the conviction, that our request is right, and that your conforming to it will subserve the greatest good.

At a meeting of the abovementioned memorialists, held in the first Parish in Cambridge, on the second day of October, A. D. 1827, they voted, unanimously, that the foregoing reply to the answer of the Rev. Dr. Holmes, therein mentioned, be made to that answer, and that the Committee of said memorialists be directed to transmit to him a copy of said reply and of this vote.

ABRAHAM HILLIARD, } *The Committee
ABEL WHITNEY, }
JOB WYETH, } *of
 } *said Memorialists.***

On the 17th November, 1827, the Committee of the Memorialists received, in reply to the preceding Address, the following communication from Dr. Holmes.

BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

In my reply to your first memorial, I am not conscious of having given occasion for the remarks and strictures in your second. Whatever may be the present difference between me and a part of my parishioners "in some important religious theories," I am at a loss to conjecture on what ground you allege, that "this difference, in a great degree, is coeval with my ordination in this parish." The Church and Society, with the knowledge of my religious principles, were remarkably unanimous in inviting me to become their minister. It was this unanimity, which more clearly than any thing else indicated to me my duty to accept the invitation. It was this, which encouraged me to undertake the difficult and laborious work of the ministry in this place; and the remembrance of this unanimity at that time, and an uncommon degree of it, in continuance, with correspondent tokens of affection, have constantly lightened its labors, and encouraged me in the performance of its duties. Although my religious principles have been uniformly retained and expressed from the time of my settlement to this day, there has been no expression to me of dissatisfaction with them until the reception of your memorial. Had there been any considerable change in my own principles, or had I manifested a desire and aim to have very different principles introduced into the pulpit; those members of the Church and Society, who held to the principles upon which I was settled, would have had just cause to complain, that I had departed from the terms, virtually implied in the contract at my settlement. If the memorial had shown, that there has been no considerable change in the religious principles of the pastors of the Churches with whom we have been associated, compared with those of their predecessors

thirty years ago, it might have been of weight ; but since this change is known to be so great, as to form another denomination, in distinction from the former—a distinction which is becoming more and more apparent, the case is essentially altered. If it had shown that the ministry of our denomination, who preach in our pulpit, have “altered their theological theories at least as much as the clergy, usually denominated liberal, have theirs,” it might have had a bearing upon the case ; but as this is not attempted to be shown, but merely an opinion given, that “the clergy of our denomination” have thus altered their theories, this opinion affects not the argument.

It were needless to discuss here the “rights of conscience,” since neither of us deny them. Were I conscious of having ever denied, or attempted to abridge, those rights, I might perceive the pertinency of what is urged upon that subject. It is more to the purpose to proceed to the consideration of the memorial, which I had supposed to be answered without ambiguity—if just conclusions had been drawn by the memorialists, from plain and perspicuous premises.

By your last communication it appears, that you “are desirous of hearing those subjects and theories” upon which ministers “differ from one another, fully and dispassionately discussed, that you may hear the whole of those subjects, and all the facts and arguments relating thereto, and may consider them fully before making an ultimate decision.” Were the object of the memorial, as thus distinctly stated, to be kept in view, in the exchanges of ministers who differ from each other in religious principles ; it would be incumbent on us, instead of considering how nearly we *agree*, to consider how widely we *differ*, on some important subjects, and not merely to acquiesce in the preaching of doctrines very different from our own, but to request, or advise, that very course of preaching. Now, against the utility, or safety, of such diversity of preaching in the same pulpit, not only do the reasons which I have already presented to you remain in full force in my own view, but they are decisive in the view of some, at least, of those ministers denominated liberal, whom you and I respect and esteem. I observed to you, that there are ministers of that denomination, who are decidedly of the opinion, that exchanges, where there is so great a difference in religious sentiments, are not advisable. I now say farther, that there are ministers of that description, whose declared judgment is, that a minister *ought not* to bring forward, in another’s pulpit, doctrines known to be at variance with those statedly delivered there by the pastor of the Church. The principle, therefore, upon which the memorial is grounded, would alike embarrass your own minister, and some of that class of ministers, with whom, upon your own principle, you would desire an exchange. Were I to make the proposed exchanges, upon the principle of the memorial, with a mutual understanding that the doctrines which I neither preach, nor believe, are desired or expected to be preached on such occasions, you will readily perceive, that I should not only deviate from the common and most approved usages of ministers and Churches of all denominations, but disregard the very reasons which I before assigned to you, as satisfactory to ministers of very different theological principles, against such exchanges. For those reasons, and others omitted here, I must refer you to my former answer. The reasons are, in my mind, conclusive, and they appear to have weight in yours. “Great,” you observe, “and numerous disadvantages would result from a decided difference and constant conflict between a preacher and his hearers—devotion is prevented, or interrupted, and their minds are less engaged in devotional exercises, than in efforts to support their own theories, and to disprove those which they hear from the pulpit.” Would not such disadvantages, and many other, result from a continual conflict between the stated pastor and those who should preach in his pulpit ? I firmly believe they would ;—and from the regard which you have been pleased to express for my convictions of duty, and rights of conscience, I presume you will neither ask nor expect me to do, what neither my judgment will approve nor my conscience allow.

With your rights of conscience, Brethren and Friends, I have never meant, nor do I mean, to interfere. You well know, that far from dictating to my hearers what they must believe, I merely present to them what I believe to be scriptural truths, inculcating it upon them to search the Scriptures for themselves ; to compare what is preached with the Word of God ; and to be “ready to give an answer to every one that asketh a reason” of their faith and hope. As this is the duty of every *hearer*, so it is the duty of every *preacher*, of the Word. “If

any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." A minister of the gospel is solemnly bound to study the Scriptures diligently, to expound them clearly, and to apply them faithfully, " commanding himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God." This has been, and by the grace of God, shall be my aim in "this ministry." The apostolical precept is binding upon me and upon every minister of Christ : "Take heed to thyself, and to thy doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." By any other course I could not reasonably expect to save either. As therefore I regard your salvation or my own, I *must* observe this precept. "Necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel" according to my understanding of it, "as of the ability which God giveth." Nor does my responsibility stop here. It extends to the ministrations performed in my place, through my voluntary agency.

Believing therefore, as I do believe, that neither the unity and peace, nor the moral and religious interests of the Church and Society, would be promoted by the proposed diversity of preaching, but, on the contrary, the most unhappy divisions, and the most injurious effects, to the present, and probably to future generations, I cannot, either as your minister, or as your friend, be accessory to it. As far as it is consistent with "holding faith and a good conscience," I would "become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some." If I seem to disregard the wishes, or the taste, of my hearers, it is because I am more desirous to *save*, than to please them. Nor can I ever forget the solemn declaration of an apostle—indelibly impressed upon my mind in the text, and by the discourse upon it, at my ordination ; "For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."

Gratefully remembering the assurance you have given me, that you "should be most unwilling to interfere with my convictions of duty," I persuade myself that on mature reflection, you will ask of me no greater pledge, than that which I gave to this church and people when they were committed to my pastoral care. This I am ready to renew, and do now renew, as in the presence of God, to whom I must soon give an account of my ministry. Commanding you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and praying that we may mutually "endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," I am, Brethren and Friends,

Your Friend and Servant in the Gospel,

A. HOLMES.

To the Committee of the Memorialists.

A large number of the Parishioners, having been made acquainted with the foregoing communication from Dr. Holmes, at a meeting called for that purpose, made written application to the Parish Committee to call a Parish meeting, as soon as might be convenient, to consider and act upon the following articles, which were inserted in the warrant for said meeting, *viz.* :

" 1. To see if the Parish will by vote request the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the Pastor of said Parish, to exchange a reasonable proportion of the time with such respectable clergymen of the liberal denomination, as are now Pastors of the religious societies with which the religious society in this Parish has been associated.

" 2. To see if the Parish will vote to request the Rev. Dr. Holmes to reject Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns, now used in our meeting-house, and to substitute therefor and to use the collection of Psalms and Hymns now used in the Chapel of Harvard University.

" 3. To see if the Parish (if the last mentioned collection of Psalms and Hymns should be substituted as aforesaid) will authorize the Parish Committee, at the expense of the Parish, to purchase an adequate number of the same to supply the Rev. Dr. Holmes and the singing seats, and any poor parishioners who are unable to purchase.

" 4. To see if said Parish will by vote invite such respectable clergymen of the liberal denomination, as are now Pastors of the religious societies, with which the religious society in this Parish has been heretofore associated, to preach in the meeting-house of this Parish, at such times as shall not interfere

with any parochial religious exercises now established and held in said meeting-house, and will appoint a committee to present the vote containing such invitation to said clergymen in behalf of said Parish; and if said invitation be accepted, to appoint and agree upon the times for their preaching in said meeting-house, and to make the same known to the inhabitants of said Parish, and to make all necessary and convenient arrangements therefor.

"5. To do any other business which the Parish may think necessary or expedient."

PARISH MEETING, JAN. 7TH, 1828.

At a legal meeting of the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of the First Parish in the town of Cambridge, qualified to vote in parish affairs, on Monday the seventh day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight;

The warrant for calling the meeting, and the officer's return thereon having been read by the Clerk, it was voted to elect by ballot a Moderator of the meeting, and

ABEL WHITNEY was elected Moderator of said meeting.

The following Remonstrance having been offered for the consideration of the meeting, by William Hilliard, Esq. it was voted that the same be read, *to wit*:

To the Inhabitants of the First Parish in Cambridge in Parish Meeting assembled.

The undersigned, inhabitants of, and legal voters in Parish affairs in said Parish, respectfully represent, that they have for some time past, learned with deep and anxious solicitude and concern, that no small degree of dissatisfaction exists among some of the members of said Parish, with regard to the ministrations of the Rev. Dr. Holmes, in his capacity of Pastor of the First Church of Christ in Cambridge. With all due deference to the opinions, that have been expressed upon this subject, by the recent memorials, presented to the Pastor of said church and society, and in the spirit of christian charity and good feeling toward the memorialists, both individually and collectively, the undersigned would solemnly remonstrate against the proceedings of said memorialists, heretofore had, and also against the articles contained in their petition for calling this meeting—and for the following reasons, *viz.* :

First. Your remonstrants believe it will be found upon examination, that the Rev. Dr. Holmes, their present pastor, was settled in this Parish with an uncommon degree of unanimity on the part of both church and people, as they then existed; that he has continued to receive the confidence and support thus reposed for nearly forty years, and that the opposition manifested to his ministrations is of very recent date, and derives its principal support from the *doctrines* which are taught by him, were fully known by his church and people at the time of his settlement among them, and which have been distinctly inculcated by him, during the whole period of his ministry.

Second. Your remonstrants oppose the contemplated proceedings of the petitioners, upon the ground, that they conceive the pastor of a church and society has the exclusive right of finally determining how far his ministerial intercourse, under given circumstances, are to be extended or limited, unless at the time of his settlement, some stipulations are mutually entered into to regulate his conduct in this particular part of his duty. No stipulation of this kind appears to have been made or understood in the present case. Your remonstrants cannot for a moment admit the correctness of the statement made by the memorialists, and upon which they urge their "reasonable" request, that no essential change has taken place in the opinions and views entertained and adopted by those, who are now styled "liberal preachers," contrasted with those, with whom a free ministerial intercourse was preserved in former periods. On the contrary they are led to believe, from the most plenary evidence too, that great and important changes have taken place. It would be needless to enumerate the evidences of this fact, as the observation of every day goes fully to establish its existence. Besides, were this to be denied, would it have been considered as fit and

proper, in itself considered, on the original settlement of a minister, for individuals, or even a majority of the parish, to come forward and require, as a condition of his settlement, that in all circumstances, which might exist, he should hold ministerial intercourse, in the performance of his official duties, with those who should hereafter be located within his neighbourhood? Would not such a requisition, from its very nature, have been considered by the religious community, of whatever denomination, as highly improper and unreasonable, and one which ought not, and could not, in good conscience, have been complied with? And is the demand less improper and unreasonable, after the faithful and acceptable services of the present incumbent for nearly forty years, and where an enlightened and tender conscience seems to forbid a compliance?

It is not pretended by the memorialists, that any change of principles has taken place, on the part of Dr. Holmes, from those embraced by him at his first settlement among us; and the assertion made in the last memorial, that "it is undoubtedly true, that there is a difference between him and a majority of his parishioners in some important religious theories, and that this difference, in a great degree, is coeval with his ordination in this parish," we believe to have been made, without that kind of evidence, which would go to support, or justify so round an assertion. Some of your remonstrants, at least, have been inhabitants of this parish during the whole period of the ministry of the present incumbent, and can testify, as before stated, that there was an unusual degree of unanimity, on the part of both church and people, in his call and settlement, and that no objections, in regard to doctrine or "religious theories," have ever been manifested, until within a very recent period. Will it here be said, that a change has taken place in his practice, if not in his principles? If this is admitted, who does not perceive, that the very maintenance of our principles requires, that our conduct should be adapted to circumstances? Does not the lawyer, the physician, the merchant, and the mechanic find occasion often to change his practice, as applied to the same uniform principles? And shall we deny the same right and privilege to the highly important and responsible character of a minister of Christ? In reply to the objection, it may be said with truth, that times have changed; that men have changed; that principles have changed; and, of course, practices must change. And especially, will it not be expected, and become almost necessary in *this* character, where there is a manifest departure from what he sincerely believes to be highly important, if not essential, doctrines of the Gospel? If those styling themselves Unitarians at the present day, embrace as much truth, and avow as little error as those denominated as such in times past, then indeed it might with *more* propriety be said, that there was no valid reason why our views and conduct should not be the same. Can it then be expected, under such circumstances, that he should exchange with those who deny the truth of what he considers the doctrines of the Gospel, and charge those who embrace these doctrines with idolatry, and a denial of the Lord Jesus? And when among the leaders of those who are styled "liberal preachers," we find language like the following applied to a large portion of Christians—that *one* primary article of their faith "has a tendency to degrade the character of God, and instead of teaching an intelligible God, offers to the mind a monstrous compound of hostile attributes, bearing plain marks of those ages, when Christianity shed but a faint ray, and the diseased fancy teemed with prodigious, unnatural creations: that the believer in this doctrine must forget when he prays, or he would find no repose in devotion." And again, upon another important doctrine, as extensively embraced by the Christian world, that those who do not receive this doctrine as true, "will not hear that God needs any foreign influence to awaken his mercy; it will not hear of the vindictive wrath of God, which must be quenched with blood." Would not language like this have caused a cold chill to pervade the moral system, and have produced a sensation, general, and deep through the whole community? We believe this would have been the fact. Amid all this revolution and change in the views and feelings of the public mind upon these important subjects of religion, is there to be no change in the feelings, views, and conduct of those who constitute a large proportion of the Christian community, and who consider these doctrines as all-important, upon which their hopes are founded, and to which they cling as to the only ark of safety? This would be as absurd as to say, that we would not apply a healing medicine to remedy a disease of the body, because its healing power had been but recently discovered. Is it then befitting or rea-

sonable, to demand of the pastor of any church, thus to do violence to his own conscience, to gratify the wishes and desires of some of his hearers? Much has been said by the memorialists in relation to an interference with the *rights of conscience*, and of bold attacks made upon the refinements of *taste*. Your remonstrants would hold in sacred regard the *rights of conscience*, and by no means either deny or abridge them; but they feel also, that they have these rights of conscience in common with others; and in consulting *taste* upon the subject of religion, they are inclined to believe, that the human heart, in its natural state, has no taste for the humbling, self-denying doctrines of the Gospel.

Thirdly. Another subject upon which we are called upon to act in the petition, and one against which we remonstrate, is, "a request to Dr. Holmes to *reject* Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns, now used in our meeting-house, and to substitute therefor, and to use, the Collection of Psalms and Hymns now used in the Chapel of Harvard University." Our objection to this proposition, and to its adoption, arises not only from principle, but especially from the style and manner in which it has been brought before us. In this particular, we confidently appeal to the good sense and feelings of all. A naked proposition comes before us, without any previous consultation with the pastor or church as such, to do what? to appoint a committee to confer with the pastor and church upon the expediency of introducing some other collection of Psalms and Hymns, than those now used, from among the many collections that exist? No; but to request Dr. Holmes to *reject* the collection of Dr. Watts, known and read of all men, used by probably three-fourths of the Protestants throughout the United States; and admired for its tendency to promote the pious feelings of the devout worshipper; to *reject* this collection, and forsooth, to introduce that used in Harvard University; a collection, neither known, probably, by the pastor, or by one-fourth of those who are called upon to decide this important question. This proposition carries upon the very face of it, such glaring impropriety and want of candor, both toward the pastor and the church, that we cannot but believe, that it will be rejected, with but little discussion.

Your remonstrants would object to the third and fourth propositions in the petition, because they believe that the right of parishes to appropriate money for charitable purposes, and the right of controlling the occupancy of the pulpit, without the consent and concurrence of the pastor, are points which remain unsettled, and of a very doubtful nature. And were there no doubt on the latter point, we conceive it to be unprecedented in the history of the church, and discovers a want of that decorum, which is due to so serious and important a subject.

From these and other considerations that might be urged, your remonstrants indulge the hope and belief, that the inhabitants of this parish will pause, and seriously reflect, before they adopt measures, at once hostile to the peace of our society, and subversive of those principles which have, for a period of nearly two centuries, cemented us together as a church and people.

Your remonstrants cannot believe, that a majority of this parish is to be found, who, in the sober exercise of either their judgment or discretion, would wish to control the conduct of their pastor, against the convictions of his own sense of duty, and of what we may charitably believe, the dictates of an enlightened conscience. They cannot suppose, that after a period of nearly forty years has elapsed, which has been devoted to the cause of God, and to the moral and religious improvement of this people, as also to numerous acts of private beneficence to the poor of his flock, they will thus willingly render his declining years sorrowful, plant thorns in his pillow, and cause him at last to mourn over their ingratitude. They believe and hope better things; they believe, that if the subject in controversy were better understood, and were viewed in all its bearings, and also, that the tendency and final result of the measures proposed for adoption were duly considered, they would pause and reflect, and reflect again. Can it be expected for a moment, by the memorialists, that either their pastor, or a large proportion of his church and society can reconcile it with a sense of duty, either to God or man, to adopt, to say the least, the very strange propositions, now to be acted upon? While your remonstrants most willingly and cheerfully admit the full exercise of the right of conscience to all, they cannot be supposed to surrender quietly the exercise of this right themselves. Far be it from them, knowingly, willingly, or wilfully, to adopt any measures that have a tendency, necessarily, "to drive away from their rightful place of worship"

a single individual, and much less a majority of the Parish. Far be it from them intentionally to disturb, interrupt, or destroy the devotional exercises of any worshipper in the house of God, or to interfere with the just and rightful claims of any individual, or any body of men. All that they claim or ask is, a serious, solemn, deliberate, and candid consideration of the measures proposed, and the many evils which may result from their adoption. All which is respectfully submitted by your remonstrants.

Cambridge, December 31, 1827.

Signed by Jonas Wyeth and forty-four others.

Whereupon, the same having been read, it was *Voted*, that the further consideration of said Remonstrance be postponed until the articles in the warrant shall have been disposed of.

Voted, to proceed to the consideration of the articles in the warrant, whereupon it was

Voted, That this Parish request the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the pastor of said Parish, to exchange a reasonable proportion of the time with such respectable clergymen of the liberal denomination, as are now pastors of the religious societies with which the religious society in this Parish has been associated. In which vote, the meeting being polled, it is found that *ninety-one* persons voted in the affirmative, and *thirty-three* in the negative.

Voted, That this Parish request the Rev. Dr. Holmes to reject Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns, now used in their meeting-house, and to substitute therefor, and to use, the collection of Psalms and Hymns, now used in the Chapel of Harvard University.

Voted, That this Parish (if the last mentioned collection of Psalms and Hymns should be substituted as aforesaid), will authorize the Parish Committee, at the expense of the Parish, to purchase an adequate number of the same to supply the pulpit and the singing-seats.

Voted, That this Parish will invite such respectable clergymen of the liberal denomination, as are now pastors of the religious societies with which the religious society in this Parish has been heretofore associated, to preach in the meeting-house of this Parish, at such times as shall not interfere with any parochial religious exercises now established and held in said meeting-house, and will appoint a Committee to present the vote containing such invitation to said clergymen, in behalf of said Parish; and, if such invitation be accepted, to appoint and agree upon the times for their preaching in said meeting-house, and to make the same known to the inhabitants of said Parish, and to make all necessary and convenient arrangements therefor.

Voted, That a Committee of five persons, to be nominated by the Moderator, be chosen to carry the last mentioned vote into effect; and the following persons were nominated and appointed said Committee, *viz.*

ABRAHAM HILLIARD,
JOSEPH HOLMES,
WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
JOB WYETH,
BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE.

Voted, That this meeting be dissolved.

A true record.

Attest,

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
Clerk of said Parish.

A true copy from the records of the first Parish in Cambridge.

Attest,

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
Clerk of said Parish.

In said "Account" &c., p. 11, the note on the votes of the Parish, at the meeting thereof holden on the seventh of January, 1828, is the following, *to wit*:

"By these articles, specifically stated in the warrant for the parish meeting, the final aim of the parishioners, who called for the meeting may be fairly inferred. It appears not to have been their intention to stop at moderate concessions, if made, respecting exchanges. Their vote, at the first meeting, to invite

ministers of the liberal denomination to preach in the meeting-house of this parish, shows how fast they would have proceeded in their innovations upon the principles and usages of the church and society. The invited ministers knew better what belongs to pastoral rights and privileges, and what would be an infraction of order and peace in the community ; and would not come."

The foregoing note demonstrates, that the minds of the writer of it, and of those who approve it, are blinded by prejudice, and incapable of understanding any facts or arguments, which are in any degree opposed to their theological creed and errors, to their unchristian spirit of exclusion, and invincible love of domination. If any candid and impartial person should first examine and understand fully the facts, in this case, in relation to both parties and all concerned in it, and then read the above note, he would decide, that it has no connexion with the rules of evidence, with the principles of correct reasoning, of sound judgment, of common sense, or christian charity ; and that those who are charmed with the orthodox opinion of native human depravity, would act judiciously in citing said note to prove a total depravity of mind. The pamphlet containing the above note, purports to have been published "pursuant to a vote of the Church," and to be approved by them, and they must, therefore, be responsible for the errors, unfair concealments, and misrepresentations in it. In justice to the church of the Parish, it ought to be understood, that those who passed that vote, and who called themselves "the church," are a number of gentlemen, not exceeding 15, and it is believed only 14, formerly members of the church of the Parish, who have now separated themselves from that church, and are the *whole number of male members* in the company, who should denominate themselves DR. HOLMES' CHURCH. That company call the REFUSAL of the Parish TO BE GOVERNED BY THEM, PERSECUTION ; and although extremely erroneous in their theory, and wrong in their practice, in relation to this case, they appear determined to procure public opinion in their favor, by using such means as they think adapted to that object. Where the facts, which admit of full proof, will not, in their opinion, answer their purpose, they, with great facility, substitute therefor their own false conclusions and crude imaginations, and appear to be so far deluded as to anticipate, that their naked assertions, unsupported by evidence, or even in opposition to evidence, will regulate the judgment of an enlightened and impartial community. The abovementioned company, who called themselves "the church," from the commencement of the controversy between the Parish and Dr. Holmes, to this time, have opposed the majority of the parishioners, and the Parish, as a corporation, in every thing offered by them to Dr. Holmes, and in all the requests which they have made of him. That company have made great efforts, and have been unrivalled in their industry, to prevent a termination of that controversy, unless they could make the result conform to their determination to exercise an absolute control over the Parish, in relation to the moral and religious instruction in their meeting-house. The majority of the parishioners, in all their proceedings, in any way, in reference to Dr. Holmes, have been perfectly sincere, and always ready and willing to settle the controversy with him in any of the modes offered or requested by them, all of which are specified in the papers published in this pamphlet; and it can be proved, to the satis-

faction of any impartial tribunal, not only by members of the majority and by said papers, but by the testimony of some of the most respectable parishioners, who have had no part in the controversy, that Dr. Holmes, after several of the parish meetings mentioned in this pamphlet, had assurances, which ought to have been satisfactory to him, that the majority were then willing to settle the controversy with him, on his agreeing to exchange with ministers of the liberal denomination a reasonable proportion of the time, in conformity to the request in the first memorial; that, in answer to that assurance, Dr. Holmes said he could not exchange with those ministers; and the great leader of the abovementioned company and of the minority of the Parish expressed the opinion, that Dr. Holmes could not exchange with those ministers, because, if he did, the orthodox clergy would abandon the Doctor, and refuse all pastoral intercourse with him. The CONCLUSION in the above note relating to the "FINAL AIM" and "INTENTION" of the majority of the parishioners, in their proceedings in relation to Dr. Holmes, they know and declare to be entirely FALSE and GROUNLESS; not only without facts sufficient to support it, but in perfect opposition to the clearest evidence. It is astonishing, that the abovementioned company should say any thing concerning "INNOVATIONS upon the principles and usages of the church and society" in this Parish. DR. HOLMES' EXCLUSIVE SYSTEM as to pastoral exchanges, and his practice OF INVITING CALVINISTS FROM OTHER PARISHES AND RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES, TO DELIVER EVENING LECTURES HERE TO HIM AND HIS ADHERENTS, in opposition to the principles, taste, and wishes of the majority of the Parish, often expressed to him, are not only contrary to his own practice for more than thirty years of his ministry here, but totally opposed to the religious principles and practice of his two immediate predecessors, and to all previous usage in the Parish. One of those predecessors, the Rev. Mr. Hilliard, was perfectly liberal in his theology and pastoral conduct, and maintained a free intercourse with the most catholic cotemporary clergy. Dr. Appleton, the other of said predecessors, although, perhaps, a very moderate Calvinist, maintained a friendly pastoral intercourse with the most liberal Congregational ministers in the vicinity, and not only condemned but severely censured preachers for rambling into other parishes and preaching there, without having been duly invited.

The assertion in the foregoing note, that ministers of the liberal denomination were invited by the Committee, appointed by the Parish, to preach in the meeting-house of the Parish, and "would not come," is absolutely false. That Committee did not invite, nor authorize any one to invite, any of those ministers to preach in the meeting-house, and of course there could not be a refusal.

"The church," as they call themselves, in relation to the parish meeting holden on the seventh of January, 1828, after stating the votes passed at that meeting, and giving what they entitle an abstract of the remonstrance of sundry parishioners, presented in that meeting, "against the then proposed measures," make the following statement concerning that meeting, *to wit*:

"At this meeting the correspondence between the individual memorialists of the parish and Dr. Holmes was introduced. The first memorial to him having

been read, a request was made that the answer of Dr. Holmes should also be read. This was objected to, on the ground, that the correspondence was voluminous and would take up too much time. The moderator having overruled the question of reading the answer, an appeal was made from this decision, to the meeting; and it was voted, that the answer should not be read; the meeting thus preferring to act in ignorance of Dr. Holmes' answer, rather than with a knowledge of it. Nearly as much time was consumed in debating the question, as it would have taken to have read the correspondence; and the objection of *voluminousness* would not apply to Dr. Holmes' part of the correspondence.

"Other measures were adopted unfriendly to liberal discussion, particularly the sustaining of a call for the *previous question*, which precluded further debate."

A little attention to the facts will ascertain, whether the foregoing statement is a fine specimen of church history, or an effusion of party spirit, intended to create prejudice and produce deception. The quantity of business proposed to be done at the parish meeting, mentioned in that statement, and the length of said remonstrance, will be seen by inspection. The minority of the parishioners, including the majority of the church, at this parish meeting, and at most, if not all, the others, mentioned in this pamphlet, appeared, presented a long remonstrance, made as much opposition as they could to the proposed business, and endeavored to obstruct the proceedings of the Parish by every means which their ingenuity and zeal suggested. They, several times, by obstructing the proposed measures by a long remonstrance and by numerous and long arguments, exhausted the patience of a considerable number of the majority, who, in consequence of it, left the meeting, and their votes were lost. Generally, at said meetings, the minority occupied much more of the time than the majority, by presenting a long remonstrance, containing not only a full argument of the case, but a great deal of ingenious sophistry, and addresses both to the understanding and passions. No impartial person, who attended the meetings, ever suspected that the minority were not allowed as large a proportion of the time, as was consistent with the transaction of the proposed business, as much time as was useful, as much as justice required, or propriety would admit. Dr. Holmes' answer was well known to the majority before the meeting, and there is good reason for presuming, that, in this and every other instance, he exhibited, in some way, his answers to his own party, or the leaders of it. The charge of "preferring to act in ignorance of Dr. Holmes' answer, rather than with a knowledge of it," is, therefore, *unwarranted* and *false*. This meeting of the Parish was called for the purposes mentioned in the votes, and, considering the length of time which the minority occupied by their opposition, the residue of the afternoon was barely sufficient for doing the proposed business. This statement was undoubtedly intended to produce a conviction in the minds of readers, that the majority of the parishioners were arbitrary, overbearing, and unjust, in relation to the minority, in their proceedings in parish meetings, and that they decided without discussion and consideration; but an examination of their remonstrances in this pamphlet, and the fact, that they were supported by long, ingenious, and zealous arguments, will force every impartial mind to believe, that the minority were treated by the majority with great indulgence, and that all the questions between the Parish and Dr. Holmes, were very fully argued before a decision of them. A *very important fact* must here

be communicated, which will show the state of mind and the motives of the publishers of said "Account," when they prepared that "Account" for the press. Why did the said publishers *wholly omit*, in their "Account," to state that the correspondence between the Rev. Dr. Holmes and sundry of his parishioners, to wit, the memorialists, was read in the annual meeting of said Parish, holden March 20th, 1828, and a vote then passed to place the same, or attested copies thereof, on the files of the Parish papers? Was that omission consistent with accuracy, fairness, a desire of giving correct information, and of having an impartial and just decision by the public concerning the controversy? Is not the charge above made by "the church" without foundation and deceptive?

Soon after the Parish meeting of 7th Jan. the Clerk of the Parish transmitted to Dr. Holmes a copy of record of the votes passed at said meeting; to which he afterwards made the following reply:

To the First Parish in Cambridge,

The Parish Clerk, some time since, gave me a copy of certain votes passed at a parish meeting on the 7th of January. That meeting having been dissolved, and no persons appearing to be authorized, either to confer with me on the subjects voted upon, or to receive any communication from me, I have been at a loss to know when, or by whom, to return you an answer. This is written, that, when the proper time and opportunity shall occur, it may be communicated to you.

Upon the Vote, requesting me "to exchange a reasonable proportion of the time with such respectable clergymen of the liberal denomination, as are now pastors of the religious societies with which the religious society in this parish has been associated"—I would respectfully observe to you, that a similar request was made to me, some time since, by certain memorialists, to whom I gave what I thought should be regarded as a clear and satisfactory answer. Another memorial, however, was presented to me, repeating the same request, but carried to a greater extent, at least, more explicitly declaring a desire to have doctrines, on important subjects, at variance with, and opposed to the doctrines held and preached by your present pastor and his predecessors, introduced into our pulpit by ministers of a different denomination. This second memorial was also answered. In both were assigned reasons against the measure, derived from a sense of personal responsibility, ministerial consistency, and pastoral fidelity, and from a regard to all the dearest and best interests of the Church and Society.

Understanding that the first memorial was read in the parish meeting, but neither of my answers, and believing that the Parish, as such, have not known my views of the subject; I respectfully refer you to the answer I have already given, a copy of which, if not furnished you by the memorialists, will be promptly furnished by myself. In the meantime, I have availed myself of the late recurrence of the anniversary of my installation—an anniversary which I have uniformly observed in a similar manner—to present to the people of my pastoral charge, and to myself, such truths and duties as I believed might be for our mutual improvement. On this occasion, I felt it incumbent upon me to let the whole assembly of worshippers know—what many of them might not otherwise have known—what were the principles upon which this church was originally founded, and what were the principles of its ministers, during the long succession of nearly two hundred years. The original principles of the church, I endeavored to show, from authentic sources of evidence, have been maintained here with remarkable uniformity during the whole period, inclusive of the thirty six years of my own ministry.

The reasons for not departing from our principles, or introducing into the ministrations of the sanctuary the principles of any denomination of ministers, known and avowed to be very different from, and opposed to our own, may be seen in the papers to which I have referred you. To those papers I ask your serious and candid attention, in the persuasion, that, whether you consider the reasons, there offered, which respect my pastoral duties and rights of conscience, or those which respect your best interests as a church and society, you will allow them to be sufficient to justify me in declining to accede to a proposal, which, in my apprehension, and in the judgment of a large and respectable part of the Parish, interferes with those duties, and rights, and interests.

Upon the Vote, requesting me "to reject Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns, now used, and to substitute therefor, and to use, the Collection of Psalms and Hymns, now used in the Chapel of Harvard University," I would observe, that the rejection of a version so highly approved in most of our churches, and so deliberately and harmoniously introduced into our own, and the introduction of a collection, unknown to a great part of the church and society, as well as to the pastor, without a reason assigned for the change, would, I apprehend, be irregular, unprecedented, and unjustifiable. The version now used, was introduced some years since, by the concurrence of the church and society and the pastor. Without such concurrence, and especially in opposition to the declared opinion and wishes of a large and respectable part of the church and parish, neither my judgment nor my conscience will allow me to reject the present version for another.

Yours respectfully,

Cambridge 7th February, 1828.

A. HOLMES.

COPY FROM THE RECORDS OF PARISH MEETING, MARCH 20, 1828.

At a legal meeting of the freeholders and other inhabitants of the First Parish in the town of Cambridge, qualified to vote in Parish affairs, held on the twentieth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight,

"A communication from Rev. Dr. Holmes, pastor of the Parish, in relation to certain votes passed by the Parish on the seventh day of January last, is read, and ordered to be placed on the files of the parish papers.

"The Correspondence between Rev. Dr. Holmes and sundry of his parishioners in relation to ministerial exchanges, is read, whereupon it is voted, that the same, or attested copies thereof, be placed on the files of the parish papers."

A copy from the Records of the First Parish in Cambridge,

Attest, WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
Clerk of said Parish.

If "the Church," as they call themselves, were desirous of having the controversy between the Parish and Dr. Holmes correctly understood, fully considered, and justly decided, by the enlightened and impartial, why did they omit to state the important facts above mentioned, proved by the record of the Parish meeting, March 20th 1828, that the communication and the correspondence therein mentioned were then read, and, by vote, ordered to be placed on the files of the Parish papers? Could such an omission originate from mistake? If it did not, it must throw a just suspicion upon the whole of said "Account." If the omission arose from mistake, no dependence can safely be placed on the accuracy of the "Account," or of the information conveyed by it. Such an omission demonstrates, that the pamphlet in which it occurs, will produce error and a false opinion in the community, unless the readers of it look to other sources for accurate and full information. Were the majority unwilling to hear Dr. Holmes' communications to them? Did they refuse to hear them?

A petition, dated March 22d, 1828, signed by seventy-nine of the legal voters of the First Parish in Cambridge, to call a meeting of said Parish for the purposes therein expressed, having been received by the Parish Committee, a warrant was duly issued for such meeting on the 5th of April, 1828.

PARISH MEETING, APRIL 5, 1828.

At a meeting of the freeholders and other inhabitants of the First Parish in the town of Cambridge in the county of Middlesex, qualified to vote in parish affairs, on Saturday, the fifth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty eight.

Abel Whitney is unanimously elected Moderator of said meeting.

A Remonstrance against the objects of the meeting, signed by William Hiliard, Esq. and others, is read.

Voted, That this Parish do request the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the pastor of said Parish, to consent to the election and settlement by said Parish, of such Colleague, as shall be satisfactory to said Parish, to co-operate with him in the performance of the duties of a public teacher of piety, religion, and morality in said Parish.

Voted, That this Parish do request the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the pastor of said Parish, to assent to an invitation by said Parish, to such clergymen as they may elect to invite to preach in the meeting-house of said Parish, on the Sabbath, not exceeding one half the time.

Voted, That this Parish do request the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the Pastor of said Parish, to assent to an invitation by said Parish to any clergymen, whom they may elect to invite to deliver lectures in the pulpit of the meeting-house in said Parish, at such times as the said Parish may appoint.

Voted, That a committee of six be chosen by ballot, to present to the Rev. Dr. Holmes a copy of record of the doings of said meeting and to request his answer thereto, with power to treat with him on any incidental questions which may arise.

The following gentlemen were elected said committee, *viz.*

Messrs. ABRAHAM HILLIARD,
JOSEPH HOLMES,
ABEL WHITNEY,
WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
FRANCIS DANA,
SYLVANUS PLYMPTON.

Voted, That this committee be authorized to receive the answer of the Rev. Dr. Holmes to the proceedings of said meeting, and to communicate the same to the Parish in such manner as they may think proper.

Voted, That this meeting be dissolved.

A true record,	Attest,	WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE, Clerk of said Parish.
----------------	---------	--

A true copy from the Records of said Parish,

Attest,	WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE, Clerk of said Parish.
---------	--

The following is the remonstrance referred to in the foregoing record, *viz.:*

To the Inhabitants of the First Parish in Cambridge, in Parish Meeting assembled, on the fifth day of April, A. D. 1828.

The undersigned, inhabitants of, and legal voters in said Parish, respectfully represent, that they have seen with no small degree of regret, and surprise, a notice to the members of the First Parish in Cambridge, to assemble this day, for the purpose of acting upon the following propositions :

The second article is, to see if the Parish will, by vote, request the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the pastor of said Parish, to consent to the election and settlement by said Parish, of such a Colleague, as shall be satisfactory to said Parish, to co-operate with him in the performance of the duties of a public teacher of piety, religion, and morality in said Parish.

3d. To see if the parish will vote to request the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the pastor of said Parish, to assent to an invitation by said Parish, to any clergymen, whom they may elect to invite to preach in the meeting-house of said Parish on the Sabbath, not exceeding one half of the time.

4th. To see if the said Parish will vote to request the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the pastor of said Parish, to assent to an invitation, by said Parish, to any clergymen, whom they may elect to invite, to deliver lectures in the pulpit of the meeting-house of said Parish, at such times as said Parish may appoint.

These propositions, the undersigned cannot but consider as extremely novel, if not wholly unprecedented; and for reasons, hereafter to be mentioned, do earnestly remonstrate against their adoption :

1. We are not persuaded that the constitution or laws of this Commonwealth authorize towns or parishes to levy and collect a tax for the support of more than one religious teacher. It will not be pretended that a Parish or religious society can be compelled to support two competent teachers; and we see no reason to doubt, that all beyond what the constitution enjoins, must be the result of a voluntary agreement of the members of the society, and obligatory upon those only, who consent to it. We question, therefore, the authority of the Parish to assess taxes for the support of two pastors, or ministers.

2. If it were competent for parishes to settle two teachers of piety, religion, and morality, and assess taxes for their support, the constitution gives expressly to every inhabitant, within the limits of the town, or society, a right to appropriate his tax to

which of the two teachers he chooses, a state of things poorly calculated to promote peace in a society, and eminently calculated to promote contention and alienation.

3. If it be doubtful, whether towns and parishes can compel the support of more than one teacher, it is in our apprehension clear, that no tax can be laid and collected for the support of a colleague pastor of another denomination; and should the candidate elected by a majority of the society correspond in sentiment, avowed by a majority of this society in their late memorial, he would, in our opinion, in all respects, be a minister of another denomination.

4. We regard the settlement of a colleague pastor as unnecessary. It does not appear, that either from age, weakness of body, or imbecility of mind, the present incumbent is unable to fulfil the conditions of the contract originally entered into with the Parish, and the fulfilling every appropriate duty of his station. On the contrary, it cannot be denied, that for a considerable time past, he has been uncommonly devoted in supplying personally his own pulpit, as well as in the discharge of all his duties as a minister. It is equally manifest, that no change has taken place in the Parish, which does not rather diminish, than increase the labors of the pastor; with the exception of some demands made of late by the moral and religious exigencies of the people, which have been cheerfully attended to in the performance of considerable *extra* service.

In the view of these facts, and of the avowed opinions of those, who make this proposal, your remonstrants can perceive no cause for the proposition of settling a colleague with Dr. Holmes, which does not originate in hostility to the *doctrines*, which have been taught by him from the beginning; and which has for its object the settlement of one of opposite opinions. In this view of the case, the settlement of a colleague could not fail to be attended with great difficulties, both to the pastor, and to the society. For, although the article in the warrant does not expressly state the fact, yet it may be fairly inferred from past proceedings, that such a colleague as the parish would elect, would not be one, who would co-operate with the present rightful incumbent, but that there would exist such a diversity of views between the pastors, and their respective adherents, as might be expected to produce any results, rather than those of peace and edification. Besides, a considerable number of this church and society cherish a strong attachment to Dr. Holmes, not only for his private and public worth, but also, as according with him in our doctrinal views, as consonant with reason, and the word of God. And moreover, we are fully satisfied of his ability and inclination to discharge all the duties incumbent upon him, as a moral and religious teacher. Under these circumstances, your remonstrants cannot forbear quoting the sentiments expressed in the last memorial presented to Dr. Holmes, "that great and numerous disadvantages must result in a moral and religious view, from a decided difference and constant conflict of theory between a preacher and his hearers. When parishioners assemble for public worship, if there is a great conflict of principle between them and the preacher, devotion is prevented or interrupted, and their minds are less engaged in devotional exercises, than in efforts to support their own theories, and to disprove those, which they hear from the pulpit. If the preacher and his hearers are much opposed to each other in their theology, they cannot harmonize with him in public worship, while he is constantly delivering and laboring to establish opinions, which they fully believe to be contradictory to reason, or revelation, or to one another." If this principle operates upon the minds of the hearers with so much force, what must the effect be upon the mind of the moral and religious teacher, under these circumstances? A pastor of a church and society, who has been laboring for nearly forty years, inculcating what he believes to be the truth, and perfectly consistent with both "reason and scripture," co-operating with one, who attempts to disprove the doctrines, to the exposition of what he thinks as inconsistent both with reason and scripture. The proposition, upon the very face of it, involves a request so unreasonable, as cannot fail to be apparent to every reflecting mind.

Your remonstrants object to the proposition, as involving an unnecessary expense upon the parish in the support of two teachers, while a contract exists with one, who is both able and willing to fulfil the contract on his part, by the faithful discharge of all his duties. Were the fact otherwise, a proposal to afford him assistance would be reasonable and fitting. But even in this case, propriety would seem to demand that he should be consulted with, in regard to the person introduced as a fellow-laborer, with whom he is to act in so peculiar and intimate a relation. But in the present instance, he is indirectly, yet plainly told, that he is to have no voice in what so nearly concerns him. To a pastor, whose day of labor was nearly closed, such a

course would indeed be painful. What then must it be to one, fully competent to his duties, in the full vigor of his mind, to have thus thrust into his vineyard, in the midst of his labors, one, whose views and feelings would, in all probability, be directly opposed to his own.

As the third proposition is, in its nature and object, similar to the second, we would only remark, that we regard the proposal to Dr. Holmes, to consent that the Parish should be permitted to supply his pulpit, half the time, at their own discretion, implying, as it obviously does, a supply also by ministers of sentiments, hostile to his own, appears to us, to be the greatest indignity ever known to be offered to an aged and venerable minister of Christ, who, for almost forty years, has done nothing, but to increase his claims upon his people to affectionate and respectful treatment. And we trust that the fair fame of this parish may not be handed down, by our own act, to our posterity, and to other generations, with such a blot upon it. The request is in direct violation of the immemorial rights of a minister in his own Parish; and in principle, cannot easily be distinguished from the provision made by law, for putting conservators over those, who, by reason of incompetency, are unable to manage their own affairs; the Parish, in the present case, kindly offering to perform the duties of that office over Dr. Holmes. Nothing, we are persuaded, can exempt this society from deep disgrace, in making such a proposal to one, who was venerated and loved by our fathers, and under whose paternal care the present generation has risen up; and who has done nothing to provoke such treatment, which is not involved in the fulfilment of his contract with the Parish, and of his ordination vows; and we cannot believe, that this Parish will consent to make to Dr. Holmes a request, so utterly unworthy of the respect, which they owe to themselves and to him.

Your remonstrants are clearly of the opinion, that such a course of procedure toward Dr. Holmes, as is proposed, would be a violation of the contract, originally entered into with him, by this parish. Would Dr. Holmes have consented to settle upon such terms? And can such conditions be forced upon him, now in the wane of life, without a violation of the contract? If Dr. Holmes had changed his doctrinal opinions, the courts have decided, that it would be a valid cause of his dismissal. He could not, on his part, violate his contract, and hold the society to its obligation. But are not the obligations between a pastor and his Parish reciprocal? Can they, at will, dismiss him, or modify the contract, on the plea, that they have changed their doctrinal opinions, and wish him to give place to others, with whom they are better pleased? In such cases, the rights of conscience can never be urged, as authorizing a violation of contracts, rendered desirable by a change of sentiment in one of the parties. It is well known also, that there were three parties concerned in the settlement of Dr. Holmes, the Church, the Parish, and the Incumbent; and whatever right the society might have had to settle a teacher by its own inclusive authority, it was at liberty to waive, and did waive, the exercise of it; and having done so, and consented to a contract voluntarily, in which two other parties are concerned, it is not competent to the Parish to modify, or vacate their own contracts.

Upon the proposal to Dr. Holmes to consent to the invitation by the Parish, of other ministers to lecture in his pulpit, your remonstrants would merely observe, that it comes to us a little out of the usual order of things. At a former Parish meeting, before Dr. Holmes' views were properly before the Parish, it was determined, that the Parish would invite ministers to deliver lectures in his pulpit, and a committee was also chosen to carry the measure into effect, wholly independent of Dr. Holmes, and without inquiring, what might be his opinions and feelings upon the subject. It now appears, that what the committee were fully authorized to do, without the concurrence of the pastor, has been deferred for the purpose of obtaining his assent, or, in other words, that the Parish chose to act without consulting him, before his opinion regularly came before them; now, that they have ascertained, that he cannot consistently with a good conscience, give his assent, they see fit to make the request. To say the least, this order of procedure seems somewhat strange; and were it not, that much time has elapsed, and the subject occupied the minds of many to such an extent, we should be compelled, in all fairness, to conclude, that it was from want of sufficient consideration.

We need make no remarks upon the 5th and 6th Articles in the Warrant, as our objections to them are included in those, which precede.

In view of the whole subject, considering the unparalleled nature of the propositions, now presented for adoption, the complete prostration of the former usages of this church and society in the election and settlement of a pastor or a colleague; the ability of the present incumbent to discharge his duties; and the necessary increased

expense to the Parish, by adopting the proposed measures, we do hereby solemnly enter our objections thereto.

Cambridge, April 5, 1828.

A copy,

Attest,

Signed by William Hilliard and 41 others.

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
Clerk of the First Parish in Cambridge.

Soon after the last mentioned parish meeting, the committee appointed by the same presented to Dr. Holmes a copy of the record of the doings at said meeting, and subsequently received from him the following answer.

To the First Parish in Cambridge.

Had the grounds and reasons of your vote, to request me to consent to your election and settlement of a colleague, been stated to me, I might have been enabled to form a more competent judgment respecting my present duty. The request, as it is presented to me, unsupported by any assigned reason, leaves me to the consideration of it with no other light than what is derived from preceding transactions. In those transactions there is no allusion whatever to the present proposal, which, made as it is without consultation or conference with your pastor, subjects him to the necessity—unprecedented, it is believed, in a case of such solemn and mutual concern—of judging and answering for himself alone. But he has devoutly and importunately sought *divine* light and guidance; and it will be his aim to give an answer which his own conscience will approve, and which, he trusts, will commend itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

The design of the introduction of a colleague, so far as I can perceive, must be, either to co-operate with your present pastor, in the maintenance of the same religious principles which he has maintained during his whole ministry; or, to attempt to co-operate with him in the maintenance of different principles, and a different course of ministrations. If the design were, to have an harmonious co-operation, such as would "become the gospel of Christ," and tend, with a divine blessing, to promote truth and piety, unity and peace; your pastor might reasonably have expected the expression of such a design, in which his feelings, his carez, and his labors, must be intimately and deeply concerned. If the design were, to have a colleague to co-operate with him in the maintenance of such religious principles, as neither this church nor any of its ministers have ever maintained—a co-operation, which, instead of being harmonious, would be necessarily discordant—your pastor might still have justly expected to be made acquainted with that design. Were an harmonious co-operation intended, had the necessity or expediency of settling a colleague been made to appear, your pastor might have been able to give an answer to mutual satisfaction; on the contrary supposition, neither his judgment nor his conscience would allow him to consent to a measure, alike hostile to his own peace and usefulness, and, as he solemnly believes, to all your best interests for this world and the next.

Without the knowledge of the grounds and reasons of the request, and in opposition to the declared judgment and wishes of a large and respectable proportion of my parishioners, I cannot give my consent to the election and settlement of a colleague. Nor can I, for the same reasons, give my assent to a division of the services of the Sabbath with ministers, whom I may neither know nor approve.

An arrangement having been already made, and a committee authorized, to invite clergymen to deliver lectures in our meeting-house, without consultation or conference with your pastor, he is precluded from giving or withholding his assent to a measure, which would be discountenanced by all the courtesies of society, and which is at variance with all the established usages of Christian churches and people.

With due respect and regard,

A. HOLMES, Pastor.

Cambridge, 11th April, 1828.

*To Abraham Hilliard, Esq. and the other
members of the Committee, authorized
to receive this Answer.*

The Parish Committee, on the written application of seventy-six voters of the Parish, under date of April 21, 1828, issued their warrant for a meeting on the 17th of May following, for the purposes indicated by the votes passed at that meeting.

PARISH MEETING, MAY 17, 1828.

At a legal meeting of the freeholders and other inhabitants of the First Parish in the town of Cambridge in the County of Middlesex and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, qualified to vote in Parish affairs, held at the Court-house in said Parish, on Saturday, the seventeenth day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight,

ABEL WHITNEY is unanimously elected Moderator of said meeting.

The petition to the Parish Committee for calling this meeting is read.

A communication from the Rev. Dr. Holmes, in relation to the votes of said Parish on the fifth of April last past, is read, and ordered to be placed on the files of the Parish papers.*

A Remonstrance signed by William Hilliard, Esq. and others, against the objects and proceedings of this meeting, being offered, and heard, it is voted that the same be placed upon the files of the Parish papers.

“Voted, That this Parish do request the Rev. Dr. Holmes to discontinue the public evening lectures in the meeting-house of said Parish, and in said Parish, by clergymen of the Calvinistic denomination. In which vote, the meeting being polled, it is found that fifty persons voted in the affirmative, and thirteen persons in the negative.

“Voted, That this parish do request the Rev. Dr. Holmes to discontinue his exchanges with clergymen of the Calvinistic denomination.

“Voted, That this Parish do request the Rev. Dr. Holmes, in case he shall not comply with the requests in the preceding votes, to ask a dismissal from his office of Pastor of said Parish.

“Voted, That Abraham Hilliard, Joseph Holmes, Abel Whitney, William J. Whipple, Francis Dana, and Sylvanus Plympton, be a committee to receive the Answer of the Rev. Dr. Holmes to the proceedings of this meeting, with authority to confer with him, should he desire such conference, in relation to the subject matter of the preceding votes and the acts of the Parish in reference to the same.

“Voted, That this meeting be dissolved.”

A true record. Attest.

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,

Clerk of said Parish.

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy from the records of the First Parish in Cambridge.

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE, Clerk of said Parish.

The following is the Remonstrance above referred to.

To the Inhabitants of the First Parish in Cambridge, in Parish Meeting assembled, on the seventeenth day of May, A. D. 1828.

The undersigned inhabitants of, and legal voters in Parish meetings, respectfully represent,

That by the legal authority of said Parish, they are again called together, to deliberate and act upon a subject, involving questions and principles, deeply

* See preceding page.

interesting, not only to themselves, but also as having an important bearing upon the Christian community at large. As from a sense of duty, they have been led heretofore to remonstrate against the proceedings of the Parish, in relation to its connexion with Dr. Holmes, as their pastor, in the several propositions submitted to him, so again, from a solemn sense of duty, they would remonstrate against the several proposals, embraced in the warrant for calling this meeting.

The undersigned having already expressed their opinions at large, with regard to most of the subjects, upon which they are now called to act, think it wholly unnecessary to take up the time of the meeting, by fully setting forth their reasons, for again remonstrating; because, although they consider the proposed measures to differ in degree, yet they hold them to be nearly the same in principle, with those heretofore adopted by the Parish, and for an opposition to which, they have, more than once, set forth their reasons at large. From a serious review of their opinions thus expressed, they have found no good and sufficient reasons for a dissent. They would remark, however, upon the subject of exchanges, that the ancient and universal usage among the clergy, gives to a pastor the same right to exchange with his brethren, as if it had been provided for in the articles of his settlement; and therefore, that if a clergyman has a right to preach those sentiments, which he was known to hold at the time of his settlement, he has a right also, at times, to maintain ministerial intercourse with those who hold essentially the same sentiments with himself. The attempt to deprive him of this privilege, could only be equalled by a request, that he should preach, not what he might believe, but what his Parish might see fit to dictate to him. These remarks apply not only to so much of the warrant, as relates to exchanges for the regular Sabbath exercises, but also to that part of it, which relates to occasional lectures; for, from the manner in which the warrant is worded, your remonstrants must consider the objections to those services, as going solely to the doctrinal character of those who officiate; and did not the words themselves imply this, they should feel bound to consider it the sole intention of the request. For your remonstrants could not consider it as intended to go to prohibit a religious exercise of this nature, as the parish have more than once expressed their sense of the importance of this *extra* service, by requesting Dr. Holmes to consent to the admission of such clergymen, as the Parish should choose, for this express purpose. A committee was also appointed to invite neighbouring clergymen to perform such services, which committee is still in existence, with power to act.

An attempt to prohibit a number of individuals within the Parish assembling with their pastor, and that too, without encroaching upon the legal rights of the Parish at all, for the purpose of attending upon a course of moral and religious instruction, derived from the word of God, appears to your remonstrants an alarming stretch of power in a majority of uplifted hands over the minority, and as without a parallel in these days of boasted religious light and freedom. An attempt at control, so novel in our land, we trust never will be countenanced by this meeting. Amid all the excitement of the present moment, we cannot but cherish the hope, that there is still too much good feeling to support a measure, which, at some future period, would be remembered with regret.

With regard to the subject of the 5th article in the warrant, we scarcely know how to express our feelings. After the repeated requests which have been made to the pastor, all of which involve the same principle, and which was rejected, in answer to the first memorial presented to him, we are constrained to consider the whole subject-matter of the warrant to turn upon this article. Can it, for one moment, be supposed, that any upright and independent man would consent to cut himself off from all official communion with those of his clerical brethren, who were of the same heart and faith with himself in regard to the word of God? The man who would do this, would be deservedly left alone, the pity of those who had been his friends, and the scorn of those who had brought him to a state of subjection, and a violation of his better judgment; he would be left in his weakness, and ashamed to look, where the deserted and oppressed can alone look for comfort and support. We are therefore compelled to regard the whole subject now before the parish, as reduced to a single point,—a request to Dr. Holmes to leave his Parish. If this request rests upon the rejection of the several propositions before made, your remonstrants, in conformity to what

they have already expressed, do repeat their full conviction, that from the nature and tendency of the proposals themselves, and from all the circumstances connected with them, the rejection was not only anticipated, but is fully approved. If any thing is alleged, affecting in any way the character of our pastor, they have yet to learn its existence, and upon what it is founded. If this request, however, is the result of an existing and growing opposition to the *doctrines and duties* uniformly inculcated by our pastor, the undersigned cannot but express their decided approbation of both.

The ties of pastor and people, so holy to religious minds, doubly sanctified as they are to many of us, by the holy rites of religion, by the sacred and mournful services of the sick bed, and over those we have borne to the grave—these seem drawn closer and closer round our hearts, as the thoughts of a separation come over us. But it is not ourselves alone, whom we consider at such a time. We are bound, not only as Christians, but as men, to regard those whose feelings in all these relations, are often deeper, more lasting, and more tender than our own. The feelings of religious females toward a faithful pastor deserve, we had almost said, our reverence ; and that man, who wounds them lightly, not only wrongs a fellow creature, but injures one who has no protection to these feelings, but in his kindness, honor, and justice. We also apprehend, that were the females of this Parish allowed to come here and speak, a majority of them would entreat you to forbear ; and we would hope, that we shall not be regardless of their feelings, because they are not allowed the poor privilege of begging you to consider them.

Our long, familiar, and harmonious intercourse with our pastor ; the remembrance of his generosity, and care, and kind manners towards the poor ; the many times we have witnessed how affectionate is his heart, and the emotion he has discovered, when from the pulpit, which he has so long filled, or when in private, he has spoken of his connexions with his Parish ;—these things make us feel most of all for him. And why all this ? Because he cannot, by himself, or through others, consent to preach what he fully believes to be error, and that error of no small evil tendency ; or because he will not (as we hope and trust he will not) turn his back upon those, who, with him, preach “ Christ and him crucified ;” or, because he may think something due to a majority of the church, who hold the truth with him ; and let us add, perhaps a majority of the Parish, if both sexes may be included ? Let us not attempt to drive from us a man, by urging upon him a course of measures, which, should he submit to them, would render him a stranger among his brethren, not satisfy those who make the demand, and would leave him dishonored in his own eyes and in theirs. From the foregoing considerations, the undersigned pray that all farther proceedings may be stayed, and commend their pastor, and themselves, to that God, who controls all human events to the ultimate promotion of his glory, and the safety of his church.

Signed by William Hilliard and 42 others.

Cambridge, May 15th, 1828.

In relation to the “ Remonstrance, signed by William Hilliard and others, against the objects and proceedings ” of the Parish, at the meeting thereof May 17th, 1828, after stating the votes, passed at that meeting, “ the church,” as they call themselves, on p. 16 of their “ Account,” &c. select from that Remonstrance, some of the reasons therein alleged, *to wit* :

“ Because,” as the remonstrants say, “ an attempt to prohibit a number of individuals, within the Parish, assembling with their pastor, (and that, too, without encroaching upon the legal rights of the Parish at all,) for the purpose of attending upon a course of moral and religious instruction, derived from the word of God, appears to your remonstrants an alarming stretch of power in a majority of uplifted hands against the minority.”

“ Because an attempt, as by the 3d article, to control the minister’s right of exchanges with clergymen of his own sentiments, ‘ could only be equalled by a request, that he should preach, not what he might believe, but what his Parish might see fit to dictate to him.’ ”

"The sabbath evening meetings alone were holden in the house belonging to the Parish, and these in amount not oftener than once a fortnight."

It will probably be admitted, that the majority of the parishioners, at the time of the above-mentioned meeting, had, and now have, not only legal, but moral and religious rights. They have a right to profess, advocate, and to support, by all proper and reasonable means, the principles which they sincerely believe to be derived from reason and "the word of God." Those principles, while they conscientiously believe them to be strictly conformable to enlightened reason and divine revelation, it is both their right and their duty to defend, in their religious society, against the attacks of error, bigotry, and superstition, and against all attempts to alter them by proselytizing efforts, however those principles may differ from the distinguishing Calvinistic tenets of the remonstrants. Each individual of the majority has an interest of immense value in those principles; in the cultivation, defence, and propagation of them, and while they appear to his understanding as sacred, he feels an ardent desire of recommending them to others, and has a right to protect them against the efforts used by others to cloud and degrade them by error, to bring them into contempt, or expose them to detestation, by misrepresentation, by sophistry, and numerous other improper means. Every one considers it his interest, his right, and his duty, to defend and preserve the moral and religious principles of the Parish, or religious society, to which he belongs. To have those principles corrupted, or abandoned, must appear to him a great evil, in a moral and religious view; and if he can, in the fair exercise of his rights, effectually guard against it, it is his indispensable duty to do it. What was the above-mentioned "course of moral and religious instruction?" It consisted, principally, if not entirely, of sermons and lectures by Calvinists, invited here by the minority, or Dr. Holmes, or both, from other Parishes and religious societies, contrary to all former usage in the Parish, and to the principles, taste, and wishes of the majority, for the purpose of propagating the tenets of Calvinism in the Parish, of proselytizing members of the majority to those tenets, and of supporting Dr. Holmes in his exclusive practice, which is in perfect opposition to his own usage, for more than thirty years, and to that of his predecessors. Dr. Holmes, at the evening lectures, was generally a humble auditor, and seldom, if ever, preached. Those Calvinists pronounced, and endeavoured to prove, the principles of the majority to be false, dangerous, and pernicious; to convince their auditors, that the distinguishing theories of Calvinism were essential to salvation; that whoever retained, or adopted the principles of the majority, must do it at his everlasting peril; that those principles are "moral desolation;" that Dr. Holmes' religious theories are right, and his cause that of heaven; and severely censured and condemned not only the principles, but the conduct of the majority. Dr. Holmes confined his exchanges to such Calvinists, contrary to the ancient usage, in relation to exchanges, at the time of his installation, to his own practice, continued more than thirty years, and to the religious principles of a great majority of his parishioners. Under these circumstances, it was both the right and the duty of the majority to request Dr. Holmes

to discontinue said evening lectures by Calvinists, and exchanges with them ; and his refusal to do it was a breach of his duty to the Parish, and a violation of the rights of the majority ; and if Dr. Holmes could not, or rather would not, comply with that request, he was no longer fit to be the pastor of the Parish, and ought to have asked a dismission from his pastoral office. The majority never requested Dr. Holmes to preach what he disbelieved ; but only to exchange with ministers, such as he uniformly exchanged with before, who preach what the majority believe. Let any impartial mind decide, whether it is true, that what the majority did "could only be equalled by a request that he (Dr. Holmes) should preach, not what he might believe, but what his Parish might see fit to dictate to him." Is not the conscience of each parishioner as sacred as that of the minister ? Does the act of ordaining a minister make his conscience the only operative one in the Parish, and take from each parishioner the rights of conscience he had before ?

The votes of the Parish were communicated to Dr. Holmes on the 19th of May, 1828, by the Parish Clerk, who, on the 31st of the same month, received the following

REPLY OF DR. HOLMES.

To the First Parish in Cambridge.

The Parish Clerk has communicated to me your votes, requesting me "to discontinue the public exercise of evening lectures in the meeting-house, and in the Parish, by men of the Calvinistic denomination ; and to discontinue my exchanges with clergymen of the Calvinistic denomination."

Calvinistic, like many other terms by which Christians of different religious principles are meant to be distinguished, is often very erroneously and unjustly applied to ministers and churches. Supposing you to mean by "Calvinistic" that denomination of Christians who hold to the great principles of the Protestant Reformation—not in every particular, perhaps, as they were held by that eminent reformer "whose praise is in all the churches," but coinciding with him generally, as with the other principal reformers, in the reception of doctrines which they believe to be scriptural and rational ; there appears no reason why men of this denomination should be excluded from us.

Christians of that denomination profess the same general principles of religion which have been professed by the purest churches in Christendom—I mean the Reformed Churches of Holland, of Switzerland, of Geneva, the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, and the first Churches of New-England. How a minister, holding those principles, and uniformly maintaining them in a long ministry, in connexion with a church originally formed and settled upon those very principles, and never professedly nor actually renouncing them, can consistently, or honestly, withhold an exchange of stated or occasional services with ministers of that denomination, I cannot perceive.

The general principles professed by the reformed churches, are the very principles upon which the First Church in Cambridge was originally formed and settled, and which neither this church nor its ministers have renounced, during the long period of nearly two hundred years. Were I to discontinue my exchanges with ministers of these principles, or to cease to avail myself of their occasional services, at suitable times and places, as the state and circumstances of the church and people might appear to require ; I should act in opposition to my judgment and conscience, and could not feel myself justifiable in the sight of God or man. After the assurance which I had received from the memorialists, that they "should be most unwilling to interfere with my convictions of duty, or rights of conscience," it could not reasonably have been expected that I should so soon afterward be presented with requests, which are a direct and palpable interference with both.

As the last vote, making a still farther request, rises out of the two previous votes, and has a sole reference to the answer that should be given to the requests there made ; and those votes being grounded on principles which, I apprehend, must appear to every unprejudiced mind to be as unreasonable as they are unprecedented ;—allow me to say, it could hardly have been expected by those making the request, that it should be complied with. A compliance with this request, upon such principles, would, in my view, be not indefensible merely, but highly culpable. It would be a desertion of those of the society, who accord with me and with our predecessors of this church and Parish in religious principles, and who have solemnly remonstrated against the procedure. It would be a desertion of my divine Master ; and I could not answer to HIM for such a direction, for “I am under the law to Christ.” It would be a desertion of this beloved church which has been committed to my pastoral care ; and I could not answer for such a direction, either to the church, or to “the shepherd and bishop of our souls.” It would be a baneful precedent, tending to unsettle the rights, and to disturb the order, of churches and Parishes. It would tend to discourage young men of talents and piety from entering into the Christian ministry, and thus injuriously affect the best interests of the civil and Christian community. It would serve to break down the institution of public instruction and of united social worship, introduced by our wise and pious forefathers, and most successfully maintained in New-England to the present day.

In this view of the subject, I am constrained to say, that a compliance with requests, inconsistent with my religious principles and ordination vows, and, in my apprehension, prejudicial to the ultimate good of the Parish itself, cannot reasonably be expected on your part, nor acceded to on my own.

I am, yours respectfully,

A. HOLMES.

Cambridge, 31st May, 1828.

After the receipt by the committee of the above communication, and consultation with several Parishioners as to the expediency of calling a Parish meeting, it being deemed inconvenient and inexpedient to be done at this season of the year, a numerous meeting of the Parishioners was held for the purpose of hearing the said reply, who afterwards adopted and transmitted to Dr. Holmes the following

ADDRESS OF EIGHTY PARISHIONERS.

To the Rev. Dr. Holmes, Pastor of the First Church in Cambridge.

The subscribers, who are parishioners and legal voters in the First Parish in Cambridge, have recently examined your answer to the last votes of the Parish, addressed to you, requesting you “to discontinue the public exercise of evening lectures in the meeting-house and in the Parish, by men of the Calvinistic denomination ; to discontinue your exchanges with clergymen of the Calvinistic denomination ; and, in case of your refusal to comply with those requests, to ask a dismissal from your office of pastor of said Parish.”

As it is not convenient to the parishioners to attend a Parish meeting at this season of the year, we think it expedient to express to you our objections to that answer, and the reasons of the dissatisfaction which it has excited in our minds. If it be practicable to obtain and secure our parochial rights and privileges, by patience and perseverance, in the use of petition, argument, and persuasion, we are desirous of avoiding the necessity of resorting to a legal tribunal for that purpose. It is, perhaps, important, that you should understand seasonably, that we consider the parochial rights, which we have heretofore claimed, of inestimable value ; that we have not abandoned them, nor despaired of regaining them ; and that we have firmly resolved to demand and pursue those rights, until we shall obtain the perfect and unmolested enjoyment of them. Your answer has no tendency to convince us, that there is any thing wrong in those votes, or in the principles on which they are founded ; but, on reflection, we approve both the votes and the principles, and are convinced, that your previous conduct rendered it not only proper but expedient to pass those votes. You, Sir, undoubtedly recollect the writings which we and the Parish addressed to

you, previous to the Parish meeting in which those votes were passed, and the principles, facts, and arguments contained in them, and we mention them here for the purpose of stating; that we yet fully approve those writings, and that no answer received from you, nor any remonstrance from the minority, your adherents, has in any degree tended to convince us, that those writings are, in any respect, erroneous, or that any part of the substance of them requires alteration or amendment. On some future occasion, we shall probably exhibit to you the results of our examination of your answers, to which we have not replied, and of the remonstrances by your adherents, composed of the very small number of persons who constitute the minority in this Parish.

In your answer to the abovementioned votes, you say, Sir, that "*Calvinistic*," is often very erroneously and unjustly applied to ministers and churches. You do not state in what such error and injustice consist, nor any instances of either of them, nor any evidence to prove a single case of an erroneous or unjust application of that term. It has become somewhat fashionable among Calvinists, when they have suspected that the epithet "*Calvinistic*" has excited prejudice against them, to complain loudly of its application to them; but those who have made such complaints, have generally demonstrated by their preaching, that there was neither error nor injustice in the application; that they retained the principles and spirit of Calvinism, and objected to that application only because they had become prudent, and were desirous of partially concealing and softening the harsher and more offensive parts of their system. Considering those votes, therefore, independently of the communications previously made to you, there is no ambiguity in the word "*Calvinistic*," as used by the Parish. But, before those votes, you had been repeatedly informed, that we differed in our religious principles from you and your favorite preachers, and that we conscientiously objected to the theological theories of those whom you exclusively invited into our pulpit. Preceding transactions, between you and the liberal part of the parishioners, had so fully made known to you our principles and wishes, and designated to you the class of preachers to whom we object, that you could not, had you been willing to understand, doubt the sense in which "*Calvinistic*" is used in those votes. You were not, therefore, under the necessity of making any supposition in relation to the meaning of that word; but the supposition was made for the purpose of introducing a number of subjects, which we had heard from you much too often before;—subjects which, notwithstanding your great partiality for them, have no connexion with the case, nor any adaptation to our religious principles, taste, or wishes.

The abovementioned subjects are contained in the following part of your answer, *to wit*, "Supposing you to mean by '*Calvinistic*,' that denomination of Christians, who held the great principles of the Protestant Reformation,—not in every particular, perhaps, as they were held by that eminent reformer, 'whose praise is in all the churches,' but coinciding with him generally, as with the other principal reformers, in the reception of doctrines, which they believe to be scriptural and rational; there appears no reason why men of this denomination should be excluded from us."

"Christians of that denomination profess the same general principles of religion, which have been professed by the purest churches in christendom. I mean the reformed churches of Holland, of Switzerland, of Geneva, the church of England, the church of Scotland, and the first churches in New England."

If the subjects which form the whole substance of the above cited part of your answer, had any intimate connexion with, or applicability to the questions, which have, for some months, been under discussion between you and this Parish, we should regret that you have introduced each one of them in the most indefinite manner, and have left us to conjecture how you understand, and how you wish us to understand, each of those subjects. The questions naturally arise, from reading your answer, what were the great principles, and what the other principles of the Protestant reformation? If Calvinists, according to your definition or description of them, do not hold those great principles, *in every particular*, as they were held by that eminent reformer, which of those principles do they hold, and which do they reject? What eminent reformer has ever appeared in the world, "whose praise is in all the churches?" What do you mean by "all the churches?" Do you consider the churches mentioned by you as being all "the purest churches in christendom?" What are the principles of the enumerated churches? Have their principles always been substantially the

same, from the beginning of the reformation to the present day? or have their principles often fluctuated and varied, in important particulars? Have those churches harmonized with one another in their creeds and systems of theology, or have they differed in many leading principles? What do you mean by "the first churches of New England?" What were their religious principles? Did they agree perfectly? What makes it incumbent on us to ascertain their religious principles, or to adopt them as the standard for our faith, or for the exercise of our reason, and for our interpretation of the Bible? If we had a right, or if it were our duty, to derive the principles of our religion from Calvinists, the history of the reformation, an eminent reformer, principal reformers, or from any or all of the churches mentioned by you, it would be impossible for us to derive any valuable information from your suggestion of the above subjects, before you shall have given them a more definite and luminous form.

The introduction of the aforesaid subjects into your answer necessarily implies, that you consider them materials proper for deciding theological controversies, and disputes concerning ecclesiastical rights between a Parish and their minister. It is our opinion, that such materials are not adapted to the purposes for which you have used them. We do not think it right or wise to derive our religious theories from history, or biography, or fallible men, or churches, or human creeds and speculations;—but claiming the right of private judgment, and exercising mental independence, in relation to religion, we feel ourselves conscientiously bound to use our reason, and to study the Bible, in the best manner of which we are capable, for the purpose of ascertaining what is the only true and pure system of natural and revealed religion, free from all human corruptions, and above all human authority. But if the kinds of topics embraced in the passage above cited from your answer, were perfectly adapted to your purpose of showing, that you had not only a right, but that it was your duty, to refuse a compliance with the above requests of the Parish, a critical examination and investigation of those topics, so far as necessary to discover clearly and fully the principles and facts involved in them, would make it manifest, that you took a very imperfect view of them, and reasoned erroneously from them, and would demonstrate, that they are either inadequate to your support, or are opposed to your principles and practice, so far as they are in opposition to the rights claimed, and the desires expressed to you by the Parish.

For the purpose of convincing you, that the foregoing observations are true, we invite your attention to a candid and careful examination of some of the most important of those topics. You appear, Sir, to entertain the opinion, that "the great principles of the Protestant reformation," are substantially, although "not in every particular, perhaps," the same as the leading and distinguishing religious tenets of Calvin. It is presumed, that you will readily admit, that the principal and distinguishing tenets in Calvin's system of divinity were the following, *to wit*, particular redemption, or the limitation of the saving effects of Christ's death to the elect only; the total corruption of human nature; the total moral inability of man in his fallen state; the irresistibility of divine grace; and the final perseverance of the saints; all of which were declared by the synod of Dort in 1618, to be the true and only doctrines of scripture. If these tenets, subject to some unimportant modifications, are the great principles of the Protestant reformation, mentioned by you, a vast multitude of Protestant Christians, of different denominations, in Europe and America, have rejected them partially, and a very great number of those Christians have totally condemned them, as contradictory to reason and scripture, as perfectly irreconcileable with the divine attributes, and as decidedly repugnant and hostile to all pure and undefiled religion. Our religion, on the subjects of those tenets, is diametrically opposed to them, and bears no more resemblance to them, than light does to darkness, or truth to error and falsehood. We cannot consent to look deliberately at such tenets, for the purpose, or with the expectation, of forming our religious theories from them, nor can we anticipate learning any thing of true religion from any reformers, or churches, or ancestors, by whom those tenets have been believed, or even professed. The adoption of those tenets would appear to us equally a sacrifice of reason, and a misconstruction and perversion of revelation, the highest offence against our own rational nature, and the perfection of the Supreme Ruler of the universe. If the reformers and churches mentioned by you had been unanimous in their belief and profession of the tenets above specified, we should consider those tenets as the erroneous and crude productions of human minds, differing entirely

from the eternal and immutable principles of infinite wisdom, unbounded benevolence, and perfect rectitude. But, as we know that partisan theology cannot annihilate or control the truth of history, we confidently state to you, that those tenets were not harmoniously professed by the early reformers, or by the churches mentioned by you. Examine, for a short time, the history of the reformation, and you will find great numbers, who have belonged to those churches, or who are now members of them, who have not been Calvinists, but have professed principles not only different from, but opposed to all the peculiar principles of Calvinism.

Arminians, who are almost perfectly opposed to the five leading and distinguishing tenets of Calvinism, have been, and we presume are, very numerous in Holland, in Geneva, in Scotland, England, &c. Several authors, eminent for their talents, learning, virtues, and piety, who had an extensive and accurate knowledge of the Church of England, have stated, and contended strenuously, that the Church of England is Arminian. But, however the dispute concerning the relative number of Arminians and Calvinists in the Church of England may be determined, it is sufficient for the present purpose, to say, that the Arminians in it are very numerous, and probably are a majority, and would appear to be so, if those belonging to that church were liberated from legal fetters, and should declare their real sentiments.

In Geneva, where Calvinism flourished so long and so exclusively, Arminianism took up its residence, and in the course of a few years prevailed so much, that the Genevese might almost be denominated an Arminian church.

After the synod of Dort, Arminianism made great progress among the reformed in various parts of Europe, as well as in the United Provinces. In Bremen, Brandenberg, and other churches in Germany, it soon acquired an extensive and permanent footing. You know, Sir, the reformers, as they have been generally called, soon divided into many denominations, who differed widely from each other, as to doctrines, discipline, and worship. Some of those denominations, when they first arose, at an early period of the reformation, were extravagant and enthusiastic, bigoted, superstitious, and exclusive in their religion; but their false, wild, and absurd opinions and doctrines were not more repugnant to the true principles of Christianity, than their actions were to its spirit. The last mentioned denominations, by acquiring more knowledge, and restraining their zeal; by giving more operation to their understandings, and less to their passions; by gaining something more of moderation, humility, and christian charity, and diminishing their bigotry and intolerance; and by abandoning their pharisaical pride and repulsion, have become wiser and better men and Christians, and have ceased to disgrace their religion by their great errors, absurdities, and vices.

Every intelligent, impartial, and well-educated person, who reads the true history of the reformation, in which there is no substitution of undeserved eulogy for facts, must be deeply impressed with the conviction, that the reformation, during a considerable period from its commencement, was very imperfect; that its progress, opposed and retarded by many powerful causes, was very slow; and must feel a deep regret, that the reformers exhibited so many great defects and errors in theory, and so much bigotry, uncharitableness, intolerance, and violence in practice. We wish to know and to acknowledge with gratitude and praise, all the excellence in theology, morals, and piety, which the reformers actually exhibited, and to presume in their favor as much as we can reasonably, without contravening established facts. It is difficult to imagine men more unfavorably situated than the reformers were, for the purpose of acquiring a correct and complete system of theological principles, and of attaining to any great purity and elevation in morals and piety. They had been educated under the combined influence of Popish errors, bigotry, superstitions, gross immoralities, and despotic ecclesiastical control;—they were surrounded by the ignorant, superstitious, corrupt, and intolerant multitude, who were then the subjects of papal influence, authority, and power;—they were suspected, watched, resisted, slandered, and persecuted by the friends and slaves of popery; and a vast number of powerful causes co-operated to make it extremely difficult for them to produce, in themselves and others, that great but partial reformation, in principles and action, which was the result of their great and persevering efforts. However imperfect the reformation was, considering all the circumstances under which the reformers acted, it is surprising that so great success attended their exertions.

We would praise and honor them for all their wise and virtuous actions, which contributed to the Reformation, so far as history makes them known to us; and view their errors and vices, with the eye of Christian charity, and consider them with all reasonable extenuations, which their situation and circumstances can furnish. But nothing can transform error into truth; bigotry or intolerance, into charity or candor; or vice into virtue, or folly into wisdom. Perfect charity permits us to view persons and actions in their true character, and never requires, or even allows us to praise, or even approve, that which is wrong in speculation, feeling or action.

In relation to Calvin, it is undoubtedly true, that he was a man of powerful talent, extensive learning, great zeal, boldness, and perseverance, and that by his heroic efforts in resisting the Church of Rome, he contributed largely to the Reformation; but it must be further stated, that his errors were neither few nor small; that his conduct was deeply marked by bigotry, intolerance, turbulence, and a spirit of persecution, and that there is, in his character as delineated on the pages of the most authentic history, a great want of the humble, mild, charitable, and beneficent spirit of the gospel, and of the amiable Christian virtues. It has been stated by respectable authors, and we presume it is true, that he surpassed all the other reformers in learning and ability, and most of them in obstinacy, asperity, and turbulence. When we read the history of persecutions, and especially those parts of it relating to Castalio, Servetus, and others, the splendor of this great luminary of the Reformation is obscured by a dense and dark cloud, which can never be dissipated, but will last until the name of Calvin shall be lost in oblivion.

By "that eminent reformer, whose praise is in all the churches," we presume you intend to designate Calvin. We cannot perceive the propriety of applying to him that fragment of a scriptural text. It implies a character, to which, in our opinion, Calvin was not entitled. If by "all the churches," you mean all Christian churches, we have no evidence, that his praise, unless it were partial and confined to worthy traits in his character, has ever been in them all; nor does there exist any good reason, why all those churches should praise him, indiscriminately, without distinguishing his true from his false theories; his Christian spirit from his wicked passions, affections, and prejudices, and his virtues from his vices. Several entire denominations of Christians, composed of a great number of churches, condemn all the distinguishing principles, commonly called the five points, in Calvin's system of divinity, and censure many of his dispositions and actions. A considerable proportion of the churches, in several other Christian denominations, disbelieve and reject the whole, or great and essential parts of those principles, and view many parts of his character with disapprobation, and some of his actions with abhorrence. One class of Calvinists say, that Calvin's distinguishing theories do not go far enough; and another class of them, that his theories go too far; and many in both those classes, either conceal, or censure, a number of his actions. The above cited phrase, we fear, is adapted to convey, into the minds of readers, a very erroneous opinion of Calvin's character, and to convince them, that he actually deserved and received the unqualified praise of all Christian churches.

It is admitted, that persons possessing a correct and comprehensive knowledge of the biography of Calvin and of the history of the Reformation, would not be deceived by that phrase, but a great majority of the whole number of Christians would receive from it a false impression in relation to his character. We presume that you wrote the above cited phrase, subject to a number of great qualifications, which you did not think to express.

We profess not to be blinded by partisan principles in theology, so far as to deny praise to any person, who deserves it, or to bestow it, where it is not due, and where censure would be better adapted. So far as Calvin was a great and good character, we join in his praise; but we cannot so far depart from correct principles, from sound judgment, from truth, and from the maxims of wisdom, as to eulogize him, without expressly excepting his errors and his vices.

Should his errors and vices be attributed to the age in which he lived, if it be admitted, that his contemporaries exerted so powerful an influence over him, as to lead him into error and vice, yet whatever conjecture shall be made as to the causes of his errors and vices, they are not thereby transformed into truth and virtue, but retain their original character, according to which we are bound to view them and treat them. It may be inquired what pope, priest, emperor,

king, or individual, what synod, church, diet, or society, in the age of Calvin, or for a long time before, or after, knew correctly and comprehensively the principles, or spirit, of Christianity, so far as any judgment can be formed from their theories, actions, and characters. We have found no evidence, that any individual, or any community, society, or association, in Calvin's time, or for a long time before, or after, understood the true principles, spirit, and practice of Christianity; and there is great weight of evidence to prove, that every one, then professing that system of religion, connected with it many great errors and superstitions, and exhibited in his actions numerous violations of its rules and spirit. Does not the history of bigotry, superstition, intolerance, and persecution, for several centuries, commencing long before the age of Calvin, and terminating toward the close of the seventeenth century, prove conclusively the truth of the foregoing observations? If they are true, they demonstrate, that those, who exhibited Christianity so imperfectly, both in theory and practice, and who so often and so grossly violated not only its most important rules, but its spirit, are wholly unsuitable to be the legislators, dictators, instructors, or guides, of any person, or of the whole human race, through succeeding ages, in Christian theory and practice.

A learned, powerful, and celebrated Christian author says, "By the religion of Protestants I do not understand the doctrine of Luther, or Calvin, or Melancthon, nor the Confession of Augsburg, or Geneva, nor the Catechism of Heidelberg, nor the Articles of the Church of England, no, nor the harmony of Protestant Confessions; but that, in which they all agree, and which they all subscribe with a greater harmony, as a perfect rule of faith and action, that is, the Bible."—"The Bible, I say, the Bible only is the religion of Protestants. Whatsoever else they believe, besides it, and the plain, irrefragable, indubitable consequences of it, well may they hold it as a matter of opinion; but as a matter of faith and religion, neither can they with coherence to their own grounds believe it themselves, nor require belief of it of others, without most high and most schismatical presumption. I, for my part, after a long, and, as I believe and hope, impartial search of the true way to eternal happiness, do profess plainly, that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my foot, but upon this rock only. I see plainly with my own eyes, that there are popes against popes; and councils against councils; some fathers against other fathers; and some fathers against themselves; a consent of fathers of one age against a consent of fathers of another age; traditive interpretations of scripture are pretended, but there are few, or none to be found; no tradition, but that of the scripture, can derive itself from the fountain, but may be plainly proved, either to have been brought in, in such an age after Christ, or that in such an age, it was not in. In a word, there is no sufficient certainty, but of scripture only, for any considering man to build upon. This, therefore, and this only, I have sufficient reason to believe. This I will profess; according to this I will live; and for this, if there be occasion, I will not only willingly, but even gladly, lose my life; though I should be sorry, that Christians should take it from me. Propose to me any thing out of this book, I will subscribe with hand and heart. In others things, I will take no man's liberty of judging from him, neither shall any man take mine from me." "Hence," observes another author, "the Bible is the only sure foundation, upon which all true Protestants build every article of the faith which they profess, and every point of doctrine which they teach. And all other foundations, whether they be the decisions of councils, the confessions of churches, the prescripts of popes, or the expositions of private men, are considered by them as sandy and unsafe, and, as in no wise to be ultimately relied on." You, Sir, have not stated definitely, on what principles you believe the original churches in New-England were settled, nor proved what those principles were, nor shown that there was a harmony of principles among those churches. Those churches opposed important principles believed and professed by the Church of England, and the other churches mentioned by you. We would ask you, Sir, what makes those original churches a standard for you, or for our faith and practice? The members of those churches were generally men of very little education and of extremely limited knowledge. They exhibited strong passions and powerful prejudices. They were, in no small degree, bigoted, superstitious, and intolerant, and, in relation to religious and ecclesiastical affairs, often manifested an inordinate love of power and a spirit of dictation and of persecution. In relation to their religion, they rejected all human authority, which was intended to operate upon

themselves, and yet claimed and exercised an extensive authority over others. In short, we have never received any satisfactory evidence, that they were, by their superior wisdom, or virtues, or piety, qualified to be a moral and religious standard for you and us, and for all succeeding generations of men.

The preceding observations relating to the theories and characters of the reformers, to the history and character of the Reformation, and to the original churches in New-England, exhibit to you, Sir, some of the numerous reasons, which influence us in deciding, that it is wiser and more evangelical to consult reason and the sacred scriptures, for the purpose of learning and establishing the principles of our theology, than to attempt to derive them from the writings of reformers, or the opinions of churches, or the peculiar speculations of individuals. We have the same kind of right of private judgment, and to reform other individuals and communities, as Luther, Calvin, the Church of England, and other reformers had. But we claim no greater right to judge and reform the principles of our predecessors, or contemporaries, or to bind our successors, than Luther, Calvin, other reformers, and our pious ancestors, claimed. Generally, individuals and communities have been ready to believe, if not, at least, to say, that their principles are right, and that they are obligatory on the whole world and on their successors forever. But their contemporaries and successors have usually adjudged, that they have had the unquestionable right and adequate wisdom, to adopt, or reject, wholly or partially, and to alter or amend those principles, according to their judgment.

By the law of nature all persons have an equal right of conscience. Revelation and the constitution of this Commonwealth harmonize with the law of nature, in relation to that right. Liberty of conscience is inalienable. A parishioner, therefore, by joining in the election and ordination of a minister, does not transfer, diminish, or annihilate his liberty and rights of conscience, but after such ordination, he is entitled to that liberty and those rights, as much as he was before, as he remains liable to all the obligations of conscience. The minister, therefore, is bound to exercise his conscience within such limits, and in such a manner, as not to infringe upon the Parishioner's liberty or rights of conscience, which remain, as they were before the ordination, equal to those of the minister. We have, some time since, designated to you, what we conceive to be the true divisional line between your rights of conscience and our own. It appears to us, that you pervert the meaning of the word "conscience," and that you forget the principles relating thereto, above stated, when, under that name, you claim the right, in relation to religion, to decide, not only for yourself, but for us, and for a considerable number of the most able, learned, eloquent, virtuous, and pious clergymen in this Commonwealth, and to determine, that they are not Christians equally with yourself, and that they are unworthy of being admitted into our pulpit. If you will confine your conscience within those limits, which infinite wisdom has prescribed to you and to us, and which equally apply to the consciences of all rational beings, capable of moral action, and connected with others in society, and make your convictions of duty conform to an enlightened conscience, operating within its proper boundaries, and harmonizing with the eternal rules of rectitude, you will then see clearly, that the rights claimed by us, do not, in the least possible degree, interfere with your rights of conscience, or convictions of duty, and that the convictions of duty, with which you accuse us of interfering palpably, are founded on an erroneous and unwarrantable extension of what you call your rights of conscience. If you, Sir, have such rights of conscience, as you claim and insist on exercising in this Parish without control, if not without resistance, then we have no rights of conscience, in relation to the system of moral and religious principles, which we must hear from our pulpit, over which you appear to us to be exercising a kind of spiritual dictatorship, and, in this state of things, your conscience is the only one in the Parish, which can operate effectually concerning those principles.

You say, Sir, that the principles, on which the two first of the abovementioned votes are founded, must, as you apprehend, appear to every unprejudiced mind to be as unreasonable as they are unprecedented; that those making the requests, contained in those two votes, could hardly have expected a compliance with the request expressed in the last vote; and that your compliance with the last request would be not indefensible merely, but highly culpable.

On this part of your answer it is sufficient to observe, that our judgment of the principles, on which the two first votes are founded, is diametrically oppos-

ed to your opinion of them. How far reason, or prejudice, has governed you, or those who passed the votes, may hereafter be a subject for critical examination, and for decision, not by you, or by us, but by a disinterested and impartial tribunal, not influenced, or governed, by peculiar theological tenets. You appear, Sir, to have a great reverence for the religious opinions, and an exquisite sensibility to the wishes of the small number of persons, who adhere to your cause, and of the smaller number, who agree with you and your favorite preachers on the distinguishing points of divinity, and that smaller number are so much beloved by you, in consequence of the harmony between you and them, on disputed theological tenets, that you, apparently without hesitation, and with great pleasure, substitute their will, in relation to our ecclesiastical affairs, for that of the Parish, and are very willing to assist them in governing the Parish. Do you and the minority in this Parish charitably presume, that the great majority of the parishioners are not Christians, and that they have no religious principles and rights? The majority in this Parish feel a sincere, ardent, and strong attachment to those religious principles, which they believe and profess; and while they consider truth in theology of infinite value, and all error dangerous and pernicious, they feel bound to advocate and support what they fully believe to be true religion, with all their ability, and with a laudable zeal and perseverance, and to expose and resist false and pernicious doctrines in theology, by a seasonable use of the best and most effectual means in their power, and in that way, which will, probably, subserve, in the best manner, the cause of divine truth, and the best interests of pure and undefiled religion. Considering the distinguishing tenets of Calvinism not only false, but immoral in their tendency, we feel a deep conviction, that we are bound, by an indispensable obligation, to expose the falsity of those tenets, and, in the most effectual manner, to oppose their propagation. We regret, Sir, that you have departed so widely from the ancient usage in this Parish, and from your own former charitable and impartial practice, in relation to ecclesiastical exchanges, and that you have, by your innovations in your conduct as pastor of this Parish, excited great dissatisfaction, violated our rights, and done a great injury to the Parish.

When a minister and a great majority of his parishioners become decidedly opposed to each other, in doctrine and practice, or either of them, and there is good reason to believe, that the differences between them have become irreconcileable, it must necessarily subserve the peace and good order of society, and the best interests of ecclesiastical institutions, to have a separation take place. How your asking a dismissal, agreeably to the request made to you, could be "a baneful precedent," we cannot easily conceive, and we think it required considerable imagination in you to enable you to draw that conclusion. You appear to be apprehensive, that your compliance with the requests made to you in the above votes, would be followed by many pernicious effects; but we are fully convinced, that such compliance, instead of producing any one of those effects, would contribute, in a high degree, to the ultimate good of the Parish and to the best interests of all concerned.

If a minister has the only conscience in his Parish; if he can successfully oppose the religious principles, wishes, and taste, of a very large majority of the parishioners, and violate their rights; if he can, under the word "conscience," or any other name, or pretext, assume the authority of a spiritual dictator, and drive the majority of the parishioners into exile from the Parish, for the purpose of enjoying liberty of conscience, and of hearing true religion, no free and independent people will, in future, consent to elect and ordain a minister; but will employ one to preach in such way and under such circumstances, as shall be necessary to preserve their rights and protect their consciences against violation. To induce Parishes to elect and settle ministers, the advantages anticipated from it should be great and numerous, and the incidental evils, few, small, and easily remedied. But if, on the other hand, those evils are many, great, and difficult to be remedied, or irremediable, Parishes will not incur the risk, or encounter the danger, of having pastors ordained over them.

We have endeavored to state to you distinctly a few of our objections to your Answer, some of the reasons on which they are founded, and a small number of our arguments to show the reasonableness of said requests, and of those before made to you. It is more wise and magnanimous to correct errors, than to adhere to and perpetuate them. We hope, Sir, that you will seriously, impartially, charitably, and critically reconsider the past transactions between you and the ma-

jority of your parishioners, and that you may, in consequence of it, make such decision as shall be satisfactory to all concerned, and promotive of their best interests.

Cambridge, Aug. 2, 1828.

This Address was signed by 80 parishioners, and communicated to Dr. Holmes on the 2d of August, 1828.

On the 9th of August was received the following
REPLY OF DR. HOLMES.

To the Subscribers to a Paper of the 2d inst. communicated by their Committee.

The Votes of the Parish of the 17th of May having requested me to exclude ministers of the "Calvinistic denomination" from our public services, I stated in my answer what I supposed to be meant by those words. If that be not the meaning, the Votes are, to me, unintelligible. I need only say, it is not the character of the Reformer that is here in question, nor what can be said for, or against, the principles of the Reformation; nor is it the question, Whether the principles of our Church are founded on the opinions of any man, or body of men; for it is certain, that they were originally, and are still, professedly believed on the authority of the Bible. All Christian churches and religious societies, it is taken for granted, have some professed principles of religion. When a minister has become settled in a church and society upon their own professed principles, he himself professing them, he is unquestionably at liberty to change his own principles, if he see just cause; but, in that case, he can no longer justly claim to be their minister. His parishioners also have unquestionably the same liberty; but, in case of their change, they cannot reasonably claim the introduction of their diverse and opposite principles into his ministry.

My answer to the Votes of the Parish is grounded on the obligation I feel myself under to the Church and Parish, by our mutual engagements, and by my ordination vows; and I request the Parish Committee to communicate it to the Parish, with the best wishes for its peace and welfare, and the sincere regard of

Its affectionate pastor,
A. HOLMES.

Cambridge, 9 August, 1828.

As the above communication of August 9th, 1828, indicates a great alteration in Dr. Holmes' opinion, as to the topics which are proper in the controversy, it deserves particular attention.

If "the character of the Reformer," "the principles of the Reformation," and "the question, whether the principles of our church are founded on the opinions of any man, or any body of men," have no connexion with the controversy between Dr. Holmes and this Parish, why did he introduce them, and urge them with zeal, boldness, and perseverance? A short examination of the preceding parts of the controversy, will show the great importance which he attached to those and other similar subjects. *Dr. Holmes has not proved, that he made the inhabitants of this Parish understand, that he was a Calvinist, at the time of his settlement here.* At that time, a majority of those inhabitants were decidedly liberal, and harmonized with the Rev. Mr. Hilliard, his immediate predecessor. If a minister makes his contract with a Parish, in the usual, general terms of such contracts, and settles there under that contract, and at the time gives no notice of his intention to deviate from the then existing, well known usages in the Parish, and afterwards, by his own practice for more than 30 years under that contract, gives his own practical construction of it, conformable to said usages, is he not, in such case, bound, in the

performance of the contract, to conform to said usages and construction? When the contract was made, he and the Parish both had reference to those usages, and they thereby became part of the contract. That there was such reference to said usages is fully proved by Dr. Holmes' own practical construction of it. He EXCHANGED impartially and freely with ministers of the liberal denomination; a large proportion of his exchanges, for more than 30 years from the commencement of his ministry in the Parish were with that denomination; and then, without the *consent* of the majority of the Parish, without *any notice* to them, and against their *religious principles*, adopted the *Calvinistic exclusive system*, in relation to pastoral exchanges, in *direct violation* of *his own former practice* and *said usages*. Was not this great innovation in his practice a clear legal breach of said contract? If a minister, who changes "his own principles," which he professed at the time of his settlement in a Parish, can "no longer claim to be their minister," does it not follow, for much stronger reasons, that a minister, who *wholly changes his practice*, on the *very important subject* of pastoral exchanges, in the manner Dr. Holmes has done, as above stated, can "no longer claim to be their minister?" Such a change is a clear breach of his contract, and he has, after that breach, no right to require the Parish to perform it on their part. Such a change *in practice* affects the principles, feelings, and interests of those concerned much more deeply, than a change in *mere theory*, and is much more offensive and injurious. It would, therefore, be in the highest degree unreasonable and unjust to decide, that *such change of principles* shall be a forfeiture of a minister's office, as Dr. Holmes does, and, at the same time, to determine that he *shall not lose his office* by such change of practice.

But the questions naturally and necessarily arise from the facts in this case, why has Dr. Holmes changed his practice, in relation to pastoral exchanges, as above stated? has it proceeded from a change in his religious principles and feelings, relating to CHRISTIAN CHARITY; corresponding to, and co-extensive with, the INNOVATION in his practice? If Dr. Holmes has changed his principles on the **MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECT IN RELIGION**; on that which is greater than faith, or hope, and absolutely essential to pure Christianity, or true religion; on that, without which all professions of religion are "as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal;" then, according to his own decision, he has no longer a right to claim the office of minister of this Parish. Is it possible to account satisfactorily for the above very great change in the Doctor's practice, without a change in his religious theories and feelings of equal magnitude, and sufficient to cause that change in his official conduct? The intelligent, candid, and impartial are invited to examine critically all the facts in this controversy, and then to decide, whether they do not create an irresistible presumption, and prove in the most satisfactory manner, that Dr. Holmes *has entirely changed some of the most important of his religious principles and feelings*, and whether *that change is not the true and only cause*, which can be assigned, *sufficient to account for* the above change in his pastoral practice.

During more than thirty years of his ministry here, he exchanged freely, and, probably, made more than one half of his exchanges with clergymen of the liberal denomination ; with those, who were generally known, and whom he knew, to be Unitarians. The whole number of ministers, with whom he exchanged, or whom he invited to preach for him, is not necessary to be stated here, but Dr. Holmes will probably admit, that he introduced into our pulpit, by pastoral exchanges or by invitation, the following ministers, *to wit*, Rev. President Kirkland, Rev. Dr. Ware, Rev. Dr. Ripley, Rev. Dr. Kendal, Rev. Dr. Porter, Rev. Dr. Harris, Rev. Dr. Pierce, Rev. Dr. Foster, Rev. Dr. Channing, Rev. Dr. Lowell, Rev. Dr. Gray, Rev. Mr. Gannett, Rev. Mr. Greenwood, Rev. Mr. Everett, Rev. Mr. Palfrey, Rev. Mr. Frothingham, Rev. Henry Ware, Rev. Mr. Parkman, Rev. Mr. Buckminster, Rev. Mr. Abbott, Rev. Mr. Thacher, Rev. Mr. Ripley, Rev. Mr. Bartlett, Rev. Mr. Upham. Rev. Mr. Green, formerly of Malden, Rev. Mr. Stetson, Rev. Mr. Francis, Rev. Mr. Field, Rev. Mr. Bigelow, Rev. Mr. Brazer, Rev. Mr. Kent, Rev. Isaac Smith, Rev. Mr. Eliot, Rev. Mr. Gilman, Rev. Mr. Briggs, Rev. John Mellen, Rev. Prof. Willard, Rev. Mr. Gannett, of Boston, Rev. Mr. Lamson, Mr. George B. English. It can be conclusively proved, that he assisted in ordaining candidates, whom he knew to be Unitarians, and exchanged with them afterwards, and that they have not changed their religious principles. For two of those candidates, he preached the ordination sermons, in each of which he bestowed on the candidate elect, as high commendation, as any good man and real Christian could deserve, or even wish, and said every thing, which propriety would warrant, to convince the parishioners that the candidate was, in every respect, fully adapted to the pastoral office, and worthy of his and their entire confidence and affection. Dr. Holmes knew the Rev. Mr. Gannett of Cambridge-Port to be a Unitarian, when he was a theological student in Cambridge, also at the time of preaching his ordination sermon, and during the whole period of his pastoral intercourse with him, and exchanged with him very often, it is believed four or five times a year, for several years, and cultivated a very great intimacy with him, as a pastor and a friend, until his last exchange with Mr. Gannett, in June, 1826 ; but after that time refused to exchange with him. In a late conversation with Mr. Gannett, Dr. Holmes justified the interruption of his exchanges with Mr. G., on the ground, *that the time had come to draw a line among Congregational ministers.* Dr. Holmes usually exchanged once in each collegiate term with the late President Kirkland and the Rev. Dr. Ware.

Dr. Holmes' very public situation, his age, his knowledge, his habits of investigation on historical and biographical subjects, his connexion with the University, as an Overseer and Lecturer, create an irresistible presumption, that Dr. Holmes knew as much as the best informed persons in the community, concerning the theological denomination of the ministers with whom he exchanged, and whom he invited to preach for him ; and, as it was well understood in the community, that many, and probably a majority, of those with whom Dr. Holmes exchanged, and whom he invited to preach, were Unitarians, it is improbable, in the highest degree, and almost impossible to be be-

lieved by any one, who finds his opinion on evidence, that Dr. Holmes was ignorant of that fact, or of what most other persons, of less information and less favorably situated, actually knew. Dr. Holmes can never convince any impartial individual, or tribunal, that he did not know many of those with whom he exchanged, or whom he invited to preach, to be decided Unitarians ; and he can never control the presumption, that he did know it, except in the minds of those who cannot understand evidence, or of those who always decide in favor of one belonging to their party, or denomination, without ascertaining, considering, or even admitting the facts. Dr. Holmes may allege, that the liberal ministers with whom he formerly exchanged, and those whom he invited to preach, *have altered their religious principles*, and *ceased to be Christians*, that they *preach ANOTHER GOSPEL, &c.*; but those ministers *wholly deny*, that they have altered their principles, and a vast number of their parishioners and auditors can testify, that those ministers now profess and preach the same principles they did during the period of Dr. Holmes' exchanges with them. Dr. Holmes' opinion, or assertion, or the opinions of those who censure and condemn, not from knowledge, but from policy, can have no weight, in opposition to the evidence in this case, which the Parish can produce. It is to be presumed, that Dr. Holmes acted conscientiously, when he exchanged often with ministers of the liberal denomination, and frequently invited the candidates resident in Cambridge to preach for him ; but now Dr. Holmes alleges, that he cannot conscientiously exchange with those ministers, who say they have not changed their principles ; it therefore necessarily and inevitably follows, that Dr. Holmes has greatly changed his religious principles and sentiments, on an essential and vital part of christian theology ; on the glorious virtue of christian charity, the most important part of the christian system ; on a part of such immense value, that any man, who is without it, though he "speak with the tongues of men and of angels," is nothing. What change in religious principles and sentiments can be greater, than that which Dr. Holmes has experienced, since the expiration of the first thirty years of his ministry here, and demonstrated by his exclusive practice, to which he has inflexibly adhered, in opposition to all the numerous means, used by the Parish to dissuade him from it, and to recal him to his former charitable, christian practice ? Dr. Holmes' actions have created the above presumption of his having greatly changed his religious principles, and until he shall control that presumption, in every impartial mind the conclusion must be conformable to it, and that he has, by that change, justly forfeited his right to the pastoral office in this Parish.

On the 11th of December following, the Parish Committee, pursuant to the written application of fifty-two voters in Parish affairs, issued their warrant for a meeting on the 22nd of the same month, to act on the following articles.

- " 1. To choose a Moderator of said Meeting.
- " 2. To hear the answer of the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the pastor of said Parish, to the votes passed by said Parish, on the 17th day of May, A. D. 1828, and act in relation thereto, as they may deem expedient.
- " 3. To see if said Parish will appoint a Committee, to propose to the Rev. Dr. Holmes, to unite with them in calling a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, to advise in

relation to all differences and matters in controversy, existing between him and said Parish, with authority to represent said Parish before such Council, and to adopt and pursue all suitable and legal measures, in relation to a settlement of said difficulties, or dissolution of the connexion existing between the said Holmes and said Parish.

" 4. To see if said Parish will authorize and direct said Committee, in case the Rev. Dr. Holmes shall not accede to such proposition for a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, forthwith to proceed to the choice of an *ex parte* Council, for the purpose aforesaid, and to prepare and lay before the same, such articles of charge or causes of complaint as they may deem lawful and expedient, and to appear and act before said Council in behalf of said Parish.

" 5. To adopt any other measures, in relation to the subject matter of the foregoing articles, or to the difficulties subsisting between the Rev. Dr. Holmes and said Parish, as they may deem proper."

PARISH MEETING DECEMBER 22, 1828.

At a legal meeting of the inhabitants of the First Parish in the town of Cambridge, in the county of Middlesex and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, qualified by law to vote in Parish affairs, held at the court-house in said Parish, on Monday, the twenty-second day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight,

Abel Whitney is elected Moderator of said meeting.

A Communication from the Rev. Dr. Holmes,* bearing date May 31, 1828, in relation to the votes of the Parish of May 17, A. D. 1828, is read, and ordered to be placed on the files of the Parish papers.

The subject matter of the *Third Article* in the warrant for calling this meeting being under consideration, two memorials, one signed by William Hilliard and nineteen other inhabitants and voters of said Parish, requesting this Parish to take no measures contemplated in the warrant aforesaid, without seeking the concurrence therewith of the Church in this Parish; the other signed by William Hilliard and four others, as a Committee of the Church aforesaid, suggesting the expediency of such concurrence on the part of said Church, with a resolution appointing a committee of five of said Church, associated with its pastor, with authority to confer with the inhabitants of said Parish, or a committee appointed for the purpose, and to act upon the subject of calling a mutual Council, &c. to which is annexed a certificate of the proceedings of said Church, at a meeting thereof on the twenty-first of December, instant, attested by Abiel Holmes, Pastor, adopting said memorial, appointing a Committee, contemplated by said resolution, and containing the following vote, *viz.*

" *Voted*, that the Committee above named, be authorized and requested to appear before any Ecclesiastical Council that may be called by the First Parish in Cambridge, to represent the interests of the Church upon all questions involved in the several articles in the warrant for calling the Parish meeting, to be holden on the 22d instant." Which memorial, having been heard and considered, on motion of William Hilliard, Esq. it is

Voted, That the same lie upon the table.

The following *Preamble* and *Motion*, namely :

" Whereas the Rev. Dr. Holmes, for more than thirty years after his settlement as pastor over the First Parish in Cambridge,—following the example of his immediate predecessors in said office,—was in the practice of frequent, liberal, and impartial exchanges with clergymen of the congregational order, but within three years last past has altogether abandoned such liberal and impartial practice of exchanges, contrary to the wishes, and against the expressed request of a great majority of the legal voters in said Parish; and has, instead thereof, adopted and followed the illiberal, and as we believe, *unchristian, exclusive system* of a few zealous and overbearing divines, which is altogether opposed to his long practice during many years, and to immemorial usage in this Parish, restricting his exchanges and invitations to the particular sect of preachers self-styled Orthodox, against the express wishes of a majority of his parishioners, and knowing that the introduction of such preachers was exceedingly painful to such majority; and, whereas the members of this Parish are convinced, that the practice of exchanges, originally intended for two valuable purposes, to wit, the relief of teachers in their parochial duties, and the cultivation of good fellowship between sister churches, was always subordinate in its very nature to the more important point of harmony between the minister and his people, and the introduction of teachers, whose known opinions are offensive to the majority of any Parish, is diametrically opposed to the very principles on which exchanges,—never

* See page 30.

a matter of right, but always one of courtesy,—were founded, and that it is a gross and unkind abuse of such an indulgence to introduce teachers, whose opinions are known to the pastor to be offensive to his flock:—Whereas, by these, and other innovations in the performance of his public duties, as pastor, as well as by his inflexible and constant refusal to accede to the reasonable wishes of a great majority of the qualified voters in said Parish, expressed from time to time by memorials, addresses, and votes of said Parish, requesting him to return to his former practice of liberal exchanges, or to discontinue to invite to his pulpit, clergymen of the Calvinistic denomination,—the affection and regard of said Parishioners have become alienated from their said pastor, and his influence and usefulness in said office have been much impaired, if not utterly destroyed, as regards the majority of said Parish:—And whereas it is desirable that said Parishioners may obtain relief from grievances long suffered from the before-mentioned, and other conduct and proceedings of their pastor, (hereafter to be specified by their committee, if chosen,) and that all existing controversies and complaints between him and his people may be adjusted in a peaceful, equitable, and legal manner,—Therefore

Voted, That this Parish will appoint a committee to propose to the Rev. Dr. Holmes, to unite with them in calling a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, to advise in relation to all differences and matters in controversy existing between him and said Parish, with authority to represent said Parish before such Council, and to employ counsel to assist them if they shall deem it expedient, and to adopt and pursue all suitable and legal measures in relation to a settlement of said difficulties, or dissolution of the connexion existing between the said Holmes and said Parish,”

were then offered for adoption by said Parish, whereupon it was

Voted, That the same be adopted and passed,—*fifty-five* voting in the affirmative, and *fourteen* in the negative.

Voted, That said committee consist of seven persons, and that they be chosen by ballot.

The following persons were thereupon thus chosen to compose said committee, *viz.*

ABRAHAM HILLIARD,
ABEL WHITNEY,
JOSEPH HOLMES,
FRANCIS DANA,
WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
SYLVANUS PLYMPTON,
JOB WYETH.

Voted, That this Parish do authorize and direct said Committee, in case the Rev. Dr. Holmes shall not accede to such proposition for a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, forthwith to proceed to the choice of an *ex parte* Council, for the purpose aforesaid, and to prepare, and to lay before the same, such articles of charge, or causes of complaint, as they may deem lawful and expedient, and to appear and act before said Council, in behalf of said Parish, and to employ counsel to assist them, if they shall deem it expedient.

Voted, That this Parish deem it unnecessary to take any further order in relation to the memorials and papers before mentioned, presented at this meeting by William Hilliard, Esq.

Voted, That this meeting be dissolved.

A true record, Attest, WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
Clerk of said Parish.

A true copy from the records of said Parish,

Attest, WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
Clerk of said Parish.

A copy of the above record was soon after the meeting transmitted to Dr. Holmes, by the Clerk of the Parish.

The following are the memorials referred to in the preceding record:

MEMORIAL OF SUNDRY MEMBERS OF THE FIRST PARISH IN CAMBRIDGE.

To the Inhabitants of the First Parish in Cambridge, in Parish Meeting assembled, this twenty second day of December, A. D. 1828,

The undersigned, inhabitants and legal voters in said Parish, beg leave to represent, That, having already expressed in certain remonstrances, at former meetings of this Parish, their opinions in respect to the course pursued by this Parish in relation to its connexion with the Rev. Dr. Holmes, its minister, and having likewise, in the

same remonstrances, declared their approbation of their minister's conduct, deem it unnecessary again, at this time, to state their sentiments upon these points ;—that, taking into their consideration the state of feeling of a part of the Parish, and being desirous of a speedy and amicable adjustment of all differences and difficulties, they have no disposition to oppose any reasonable proposition, tending to the removal of these difficulties, provided the proposition be so framed as that all interested be included as parties to the transaction ;—that, considering the intimate and sacred relation in which pastor and church stand to each other, there can be none more deeply and vitally interested in the proposed measures than the church in this Parish ;—that the undersigned, therefore, cannot but hope, the Parish will not adopt any measures tending to the removal of the pastor, without first seeking the concurrence of the church, and this, not only from a regard to the church, but also from the circumstance, that an opposite mode of procedure would be contrary to reason and right, to all respectable usage, here and elsewhere, and to the spirit and letter of the statute, incorporating the Trustees of our Ministerial Fund, that statute, as will be seen, providing expressly, that the income of the fund shall be appropriated in part, “ to pay &c. or salaries of such Congregational minister or ministers, as shall be regularly ordained and settled in said Parish, by the joint concurrence of the Inhabitants and the Church thereof.” But if our minister must be chosen by “the joint concurrence” of the church and Parish, must he not by the same concurrence be dismissed? And is it competent for the Parish, without consulting, or so much as notifying the Church, to take measures for his dismissal?

The Parish have no right to infer that the Church, if properly consulted, would not cheerfully co-operate in any reasonable and proper measures tending to a removal of existing difficulties. Indeed, we are sure that they will co-operate ; for they have already had a meeting, and made a full expression of their sentiments ; and a committee of the Church are present, to lay their memorial on your table. If, however, the Parish should refuse to listen to the consideration here suggested, and to the memorial of the Church, and should determine to proceed in the measures contemplated, without regard to the wishes, or even the existence of the Church, the undersigned can only express their conviction, that no persons, calling themselves ministers of Christ, and holding themselves answerable to him, and standing declaredly and prominently before the community as heads of his churches on earth, would take upon them selves the fearful responsibility of holding his churches for nought, or that they would do any other act, than to recommend to the Parish to retrace their steps, and, at least, to ask for the concurrence of the Church. Or, if any, calling themselves an Ecclesiastical Council, should uphold and justify the Parish in such proceedings, the undersigned can have no doubt that their result would be over-ruled and rectified by an appeal to the judicial authorities of the country.

Cambridge, Dec. 22, 1828.

Signed by William Hilliard and 19 others.

MEMORIAL OF THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN CAMBRIDGE.

To the Inhabitants of the First Parish in Cambridge.

The First Church of Christ in Cambridge, being apprised, by the notification of the meeting of the inhabitants of said Parish, with which they are associated, to be holden on Monday, the 22d day of December instant, at two o'clock, P. M. “ To see if said Parish will appoint a Committee to propose to the Rev. Dr. Holmes, to unite with them in calling a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, to advise in relation to all differences and matters in controversy, existing between him and said Parish, with authority to represent said Parish before said Council, and to adopt and pursue all suitable and legal measures in relation to a settlement of said difficulties, or dissolution of the connexion existing between the said Holmes and the said Parish ; and to see if said Parish will authorize and direct said Committee, in case the Rev. Dr. Holmes shall not accede to such proposition for a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, forthwith to proceed to the choice of an *ex parte* Council, for the purpose aforesaid, and to prepare and lay before the same, such articles of charge or causes of complaint as they may deem lawful and expedient, and to appear and act before the council, in behalf of said Parish ;” and being deeply interested in the result of the measures proposed to be taken at the said meeting, would respectfully present to said Parish, in Parish meeting assembled, the following considerations :—

1. It is manifestly just and proper, when two bodies are interested and concerned in a common object, involving highly interesting and important concerns,

that neither of these bodies should proceed to take measures, which would involve either their rights or interests, without mutual consultation, and a due regard to the views and feelings of both. A Church and a Parish, when associated for public worship, though distinct bodies in themselves, are thus united, and the services of their religious teacher constitute an object of great common interest. Is it proper, therefore, or is it just, for a Parish, in such circumstances, to take measures for procuring the dismission of a minister, without consulting the wishes of the Church, who were a party in his settlement, or so much as informing them officially of the measures contemplated?

2. It is not only just in itself, but conformable to ancient usage in New-England, for a Church and Parish, associated for public worship, to act in concert in the settlement of ministers, and consequently in their removal from office. It is believed, that no general usage can be referred to, in justification of a different course.

3. Such, also, has been the invariable usage of this Church and Parish. When our present pastor was settled, he was settled like all previous pastors, (unless it be one or two of the earliest, who were settled by the Church alone,) by the concurrent voice of the Church and Parish. If he be dismissed, ought he not to be dismissed in the same way? Does it not require the same power to dismiss him, that it did to settle him?

4. But farther, it will appear, from recurrence to the Act incorporating the Trustees of the Ministerial Fund of the First Parish in Cambridge, from which Fund our present minister is supported in part, that the avails of said Fund are required to be appropriated in a given amount of the income "to pay the salary or salaries of such Congregational minister or ministers, as shall be regularly ordained and settled in said Parish, *by the joint concurrence of the inhabitants and the church thereof.*" This special enactment of the legislature, in regard to this Church and Parish, is grounded on the express will of the donors, by whose beneficence the Ministerial Fund was constituted, on the ancient usages of the country, and the invariable usage of this Parish; and requires, that whoever is authorized to receive the avails of the ministerial Fund, must be chosen by "*the joint concurrence*" of the Parish and the Church. But if it be necessary, that our minister should be chosen in this way, must he not be dismissed in the same way? Is it competent for the Parish, without consulting the wishes of the Church, to take measures for his removal from office?

The First Church in Cambridge, deeply lament the unhappy difficulties which exist between the inhabitants of said Parish and the Rev. Dr. Holmes, their minister, and feel as anxious, as any of said inhabitants can feel, to adopt such measures as will tend to bring about an amicable adjustment of all such difficulties;—*Provided*, that the inhabitants of said Parish, according to general usage, unite with said Church, and their Pastor, in calling a mutual council. Therefore,

Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed from this church, associated with the pastor thereof, with full power and authority to confer with the inhabitants of the Parish or any committee appointed for the purpose, and to act upon the subject of calling a mutual council to settle all difficulties existing between the inhabitants of said Parish, and the Rev. Dr. Holmes, as is set forth in the warrant for calling a Parish meeting, on the 22d instant.

WILLIAM HILLIARD, JAMES MUNROE, RICHARD H. DANA, S. F. SAWYER, JONA. C. PRENTISS,	}	<i>Committee of the Church.</i>
---	---	---

Cambridge, Dec. 21, 1828.

At a meeting of the First Church of Christ in Cambridge, holden by a regular notice thereof, at the Rev. Dr. Holmes' meeting-house, in said town, on the twenty-first day of December, A. D. 1828.

Voted, That the foregoing memorial of this Church to the inhabitants of the First Parish in Cambridge (having been read and considered by said Church) be adopted, and that Deacon William Hilliard, Deacon James Munroe, Richard H. Dana, Samuel F. Sawyer, and Jonathan C. Prentiss, be a committee to present the same to the inhabitants of said Parish, at the meeting thereof on the 22d instant.

Voted, That Deacon William Hilliard, Deacon James Munroe, Richard H. Dana, Samuel F. Sawyer, and Jonathan C. Prentiss, be a committee in behalf of this Church, in connexion with the pastor thereof, with full power and authority to confer with the inhabitants of the Parish, or any committee appointed for the purpose, and to act upon the subject of calling a mutual council for the purposes set forth in the warrant for calling the Parish meeting, to be holden on the 22d instant.

Voted, That the committee above named be authorized and requested to appear before any Ecclesiastical Council, that may be called by the First Parish in Cambridge, to represent the interests of the Church upon all questions involved in the several articles in the warrant for calling the Parish meeting to be holden on the 22d instant.

A true copy of the proceedings of the First Church in Cambridge, 21st December, 1828. Attest. ABIEL HOLMES, Pastor.

Cambridge, 22 December, 1828.

At a meeting of the committee appointed by the First Parish in Cambridge, December 22, A. D. 1828, to propose to the Rev. Dr. Holmes, "to unite with them in calling a mutual ecclesiastical council," &c., December 31, 1828,—present, all the members thereof,

Abraham Hilliard is appointed Chairman, and William J. Whipple, Clerk, of said Committee.

Voted, That the Clerk of this committee be directed to communicate to Rev. Dr. Holmes notice of the appointment of said committee, and the objects of said appointment, and to request of him to name the time and place at which he will meet said committee, to confer on the subject committed to them.

A true copy. Attest.

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
Clerk of said Committee.

In pursuance of the foregoing vote of Committee, the following communication was sent to Dr. Holmes.

Cambridge, January 1, 1829.

REV. DR. HOLMES,

SIR,—The Committee appointed by the First Parish in Cambridge, at a Parish meeting on the twenty-second day of December last, to propose to you "to unite with them in calling a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council," &c. have directed me to request you to inform them at what time and place you will please to meet them, for the purpose of conferring in relation to the object of their appointment.

I am, Rev. Sir, in behalf said Committee,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE.*

* This communication commences the correspondence of said Committee with Dr. Holmes, proposing to him a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, and they *continued to repeat their proposal of such Council* to him, until the 13th day of April, 1829, and used much industry to obtain from him a plain and definite answer to their proposal of such Council, to be elected by the Committee, in behalf of the Parish, on one part, and by Dr. Holmes on the other part, as will appear by their other communications to him, under the following dates, *to wit*, February 9th, 1829; March 9th, 1829; March 18th, 1829; April 1st, 1829; April 13th, 1829.

Critical attention to the correspondence between the Committee and Dr. Holmes, proposing to him such Council, is invited, that the reader may be fully prepared, at the end of the correspondence, to decide on the question, whether Dr. Holmes refused such Council, to be elected as above stated. The Committee waited from said 13th day of April, the date of their last communication to Dr. Holmes, until April 16th, 1829, but Dr. Holmes made no reply thereto, and the Committee, on said 16th of April, elected the *ex parte* Council for the Parish, on the ground of Dr. Holmes' neglect and refusal to join them in the election of the Council proposed, in the manner proposed.

To which Dr. Holmes returned the following reply.

Cambridge, 1 January, 1829.

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE, ESQ.

SIR,—The very peculiar circumstances attending the measure adopted by the Parish, proposing to me to unite with them in calling a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, render it my incumbent duty to consider the subject very seriously and deliberately, previous to any conference. When prepared for it, the Committee may expect information from,

Yours, respectfully,
A. HOLMES.

The existence of the following paper, addressed by a Committee of the Church to Dr. Holmes, was first made known to the Parish by its appearance in the “Account” &c., and in consequence thereof, it is here inserted.

“On the 9th of January, a Committee in behalf of the church, presented to the pastor the following address:—

*Rev. Sir,—*The undersigned, a Committee appointed by the First Church in Cambridge, at a meeting holden on the fourth day of January, inst. to express to you their views in relation to the late proceedings of the inhabitants of the First Parish in said town, deeply affecting the relations subsisting between you and said Church and Parish, respectfully represent,

That they have viewed with deep solicitude the various measures, that have recently been adopted by a majority of the Parish in said town, tending to a dissolution of the ministerial relation, which has so long and so happily subsisted between pastor and church, minister and people. They cannot but believe, that most, if not all, the measures proposed and adopted by said Parish, are rare, if not altogether unprecedented in their nature and tendency, and if carried into operation, would result in a total abandonment of that right of private judgment, and that independent exercise of this right, which appertains to the ministerial character in common with that of others.

The undersigned having, in their capacity as members of the Parish, already expressed their opinion, in relation to the several propositions made and adopted by a majority of said Parish, deem it unnecessary here to enumerate them. But upon a careful review of the opinions thus formed, and the reasons urged in their support, they have perceived no sufficient ground for a different judgment. We, however, deem it important in the present state of things, in our capacity as members of your church, to express our dissent from the measures adopted by the Parish, in their corporate capacity, and our approbation of the course taken by you, in relation to the several propositions submitted to your consideration. We do this, from a full conviction that a sense of duty, and of the solemn obligation imposed upon a minister of Christ, conscientiously and fearlessly to discharge this duty, alone guided your deliberations and final decisions. We are also persuaded, that many and fervent supplications have been directed to the Source of all Wisdom, for that light and guidance, in coming to such results, as would ultimately tend to promote the greatest amount of good to those with whom you sustained so near and so endearing a relation. In view of this relation, which has so long and so happily subsisted between us, we cannot forbear to express our regret, at the adoption of such measures, as have a tendency either to impair or destroy it, and devoutly to wish and pray, that the overruling providence of God may bring about a result most promotive of his glory, and the best interest of the church of Christ in this place. We trust, that as individuals, as well as a church, we have already given sufficient pledges of our attachment to the doctrines which you have preached, and still continue to preach, as, in our view, consistent both with reason and the word of God, and as best calculated, by a divine blessing, to promote the temporal, spiritual, and eternal welfare of the people committed to your pastoral care. On your part also, sufficient pledges have been given, by a long, watchful, and diligent discharge of those duties, appertaining to the ministerial relation, as well as in all the other relations of life; and we are persuaded, that in all these relations, it has been your desire and aim to advance the cause of truth and of God, both by precept and by example. Impressed

with this conviction, we cannot refrain from repeating our approbation of your past ministerial labors, in this ancient church of Christ, and pledging our future co-operation with you, in perpetuating the unity of its faith, in the bond of peace. However deeply we may regret that at this late period of your life, and of your ministry, any root of bitterness springing up, should trouble you—however ardently we should desire that your sun should set without a cloud; we yet believe, that it is the providence of God, which has otherwise ordered it, for the trial of faith, and the furtherance of hope; and that by his overruling hand, his own glory will be advanced, and the unity, peace, and safety of his church here promoted.

Although the professed object of the memorialists in their first request to you was confined to occasional ministerial intercourse in the way of exchanges with neighbouring clergymen, yet the subsequent measures, proposed and adopted by the Parish, clearly show, that this was only a first step, in a long and systematic train of propositions, which have been adopted, all tending to the same object.

[Here is given an abstract of the votes and doings of the Parish, which need not be repeated.]

These facts, with many other considerations that might be urged, serve to show, that a radical change in your ministrations, if not in your opinions, was what could alone satisfy the memorialists.

Under these circumstances, the members of this church have manifested a willingness, and have voted to co-operate with the Parish, at a late Parish meeting, holden for the purpose, to unite with them in calling a mutual Council for the object contemplated and specified in the warrant for calling said meeting. This offer on the part of the church was rejected under circumstances, not altogether favorable to a reconciliation of existing difficulties, and, as we believe, without a due degree of regard to the rights of the Church, as a party deeply concerned in the result. The denial by the Parish, of even a hearing of the Church, upon so important a subject, as that of the dismission of its pastor, and that *any right existed in this body, as such*, in relation to this subject, we confidently hope and believe, will never be sanctioned by a discriminating and enlightened public. Whatever color may have been given to a principle of this kind, in any given case, we are at a loss to perceive its application in the case now under consideration. By an immemorial usage of this ancient church, and of most other churches in New England, the settlement or dismission of a minister has been effected by the joint co-operation of the Parish and Church; and the continuance of this principle or usage has been strongly recommended by the highest judicial tribunal of our Commonwealth. Moreover, it is recognized by the very charter, under which we hold a great proportion of the means of supporting the ministry in this place. The act incorporating the ministerial fund, belonging to this Parish, expressly provides, that the income thereof shall be applied to such minister as shall be settled by the joint concurrence of the Parish and Church; and we conceive, that this provision applies with equal force in the question of a dissolution of the connexion under this provision. Upon this view of the subject, we feel ourselves bound, in duty, to contend for those rights, which are derived from so ancient an usage as amounts to common law, as also, from the express condition of our own enactments.

From a careful and impartial view, therefore, of the whole subject, the undersigned, in behalf of the Church, feel constrained to believe, that a sense of duty, a regard to the honor, the interest, and the permanent good of the people under your pastoral care, have been the governing motives which have influenced you in the decisions made upon the several propositions, submitted by the Parish. We cannot close, without again expressing our sympathy, and assuring you of our support in any farther decisions, which the rights of pastor and church, and the interests of religion among us, may require of you to make.

WILLIAM HILLIARD, JAMES MUNROE, RICHARD H. DANA, S. F. SAWYER, WILLIAM SAUNDERS, JONA. C. PRENTISS.	} <i>Committee.</i>
--	------------------------

Cambridge, Jan. 9, 1829.

The foregoing Address, by a Committee of the church to the Rev. Dr. Holmes, dated Jan. 9, 1829, was first submitted to the inspection of the Parish, by the publication of "an Account of the Controversy" &c. by "the church." The address is signed by said Committee, who call themselves a Committee appointed by the church. Had the signers stated their appointment to have been by the majority of the then church, their language would have been more strictly correct. It is believed, that the whole number of the male members of that church was, at the above date, only 19, or at most not above 21, and that said majority consisted of not more than 16, and, probably, of only 14 persons. This address is extremely well adapted to show the opposition and hostility of the majority of the then Church to the Parish, both as to the principles and measures in any way relating to Dr. Holmes, as it contains *censures* of the principles and of the previous proceedings of the Parish in the controversy with Dr. Holmes, and approves his doctrines and justifies his past conduct towards the Parish, and promises him the support of that majority in future. It appears, that the members of said majority had before, as parishioners, expressed their disapprobation of said proceedings, and in the Address, on a review of their previous opinions, they adjudged them to be right. The persons composing said majority, although but an inconsiderable fraction of the parishioners, from the commencement of this controversy to the above date, had, as parishioners, constantly, zealously, and resolutely opposed the Parish and the memorialists in their measures above stated in relation to Dr. Holmes. This little company of opponents, in the character of a Church, applied to the Parish, at the meeting holden on the 22d day of December, 1828, to be admitted, as a party distinct from the Parish, in the choice of the then proposed Ecclesiastical Council, notwithstanding their previous, constant, and bold opposition. What good reason could exist, in favor of the Parish's admitting them, as a body distinct from the Parish, when it was certain, from their preceding conduct, that they, if so admitted, would make all the resistance in their power to the attempts of the Parish to remedy the evils of which they complained, and would give Dr. Holmes all their assistance and supoort in his opposition to the principles and wishes of the Parish? The Parish could not, without contravening their principles, violating the dictates of their judgment, and endangering their most valuable rights, admit the Church, as such, to be a party in the controversy, when they had numerous and strong reasons for believing, that such a hostile company would make great efforts to obstruct all their proceedings to regain their rights, and, if possible, defeat those rights. What Parish, under such circumstances, would have admitted a Church, which had exhibited such principles, dispositions, and conduct, in relation to the Parish and its rights, and the means of recovering them, pursuant to their request, unless the law required such admission. The Church was not a legal party to the contract between the minister and the Parish, and they had no controversy with him, and therefore they had no legal right to be a party to this controversy. In said address it is stated, that "by an *immemorial usage* of this *ancient church*, and of most other churches in New England, the settlement or *dismissal* of a minister has been

effected by the joint co-operation of the Parish and Church ; and the continuance of this principle, or usage, *has been strongly recommended* by the highest judicial tribunal of our Commonwealth. Moreover it is recognised by the very charter, under which we hold a great proportion of the means of supporting the ministry in this place. The *Act* incorporating the ministerial fund, belonging to this Parish, expressly provides, that the income thereof shall be applied to such minister, as shall be settled by the joint concurrence of the Parish and Church ; and we conceive, that this provision applies with equal force in the question of the dissolution of the connexion under this provision. Upon this view of the subject, we feel ourselves bound, in duty, to contend for those rights, which are derived from *so ancient an usage* as amounts to *common law*, as also from the express condition of our own enactments." Similar statements and arguments to the above cited part of said Address have been repeated by the majority of the Church, and although they are *very inaccurate as to facts, law, and logic*, yet they may deceive those who are not correctly informed. It is, therefore, expedient to attempt some corrections of such an imposing statement and argument. The above reference to the recommendation by our Supreme Judicial Court, will appear in its true character, as a mere recommendation, by examining *Baker et al. v. Fales*, in Mass. R. Vol. 16, p. 488. In this case (pp. 508, 509,) the Court say, "that the Parish have the constitutional right contended for, cannot be questioned by those who will pursue the clause of the third article of the Declaration of Rights, upon which this claim is asserted. It is there provided, that the several towns, parishes, precincts, and other bodies politic, or religious societies, shall at all times have the exclusive right of electing their public teachers, and of contracting with them for their support and maintenance." This is too explicit to admit of cavilling or to require explanation ; as every constitutional provision for the security of civil or religious liberty ought to be. All pre-existing laws or usages *must bow* before this fundamental expression of the public will ; and however convenient or useful it might be to continue the *old form* of electing or settling a minister ; whenever a Parish determines to assert its constitutional authority, there is no power in the state to oppose their claim." In the same case, (p. 520,) the Court say, "It has been suggested, that the usage of churches has been so general and constant, ever since the adoption of the Constitution, that it may now be set up as *law*, although contrary to the Declaration of Rights. But constitutional privileges can never be lost by mere non-user. Neither individuals, nor aggregate bodies, nor the government itself, can prescribe against the rights of the citizen, with respect to any privilege secured by the constitution." On p. 510, of the above cited case, the Court, speaking of the usages and practice of the Congregational Churches in this State, in relation to the election and settlement of ministers, say, "the constitution supersedes those usages, where the parties do not choose to observe them," &c. Many other citations could be made from the decisions of our Supreme Judicial Court to show, that the Court uniformly adhere to their opinions above expressed, and that, when their respect for an ancient ecclesiastical usage induces them to

recommend the continuance of it, they do not mean that such usage is part of the law, or that the churches by their usages can annul any part of the Constitution. It is idle to pretend, that any immemorial usage has been formed, since the adoption of the Constitution; as there has not been sufficient time for that purpose. There never has been any usage established in this Parish, in relation to the dismission of a minister; and probably there has not been any such dismission in the Parish, at any time; certainly there has been none since the adoption of the Constitution. The usage of one Parish is not evidence to prove, that the same usage exists in another; and the usage of one Parish does not bind another.

The Act above referred to, is "An Act to incorporate the Trustees of the Ministerial Fund in the First Parish in Cambridge," passed December 9, 1816.

Any one who will examine sect. 10 of that Act, and apply to it the established rules of law for construing statutes, or even the rules of common sense, will be convinced, that the Legislature did not intend, nor attempt, by that Act, to annul or alter the constitutional right of the Parish, in relation to the election, settlement, or dismission of a minister; and the Proviso in that section demonstrates, that said Act cannot be applied to the controversy with Dr. Holmes, who was the minister of this Parish, at the time said Act was made. Said Proviso is in the following words, *to wit*: "Provided, that nothing herein contained shall be construed to alter, impair, vacate, or in any way affect the contract now existing between said Parish and their present minister; but the proceeds of said fund, whenever the same shall be paid to him, shall be deemed to be in satisfaction of his salary, for the time being, so far as the same will apply to the discharge thereof."

On the twenty-eighth of January, 1829, the Committee received the following

COMMUNICATION FROM DR. HOLMES.

To the Committee appointed by the First Parish in Cambridge, at a Meeting held on the twenty-second day of December, 1828, to propose to the Pastor to unite with them in calling a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council.

Had a plauⁿ vote of the Parish, requesting my consent to a proposal for a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, been presented to me for consideration, an earlier answer might have been expected. I regret, that, after so much explanation and discussion, the subject is not well understood, or not fairly represented. The statements and the language of the preamble to the votes, were not justly to have been expected from a Parish, whose best interests I am conscious of having uniformly endeavored to promote for thirty-seven years; and if I now trouble you with more explanation and discussion, "you have compelled me."

Erroneous premises lead to false conclusions. If words are used either vaguely or ambiguously, they may cause great and injurious mistakes. It was this consideration that led me to endeavor to explain the word "Calvinistic," used in former votes of the Parish, which appeared to me ambiguous, as there used to denote the principles of ministers of New England. In the last proceedings the term "Congregational" is used; and the error and imputation connected with it, render an explanation necessary, not to my defence merely, but to the cause of truth.

It is made an express ground of the votes passed by the Parish on this occasion, as stated in the preamble, "that for more than thirty years the pastor of the First Parish in Cambridge, following the example of his immediate predecessors in said office, was in the practice of frequent, liberal, and impartial exchanges

with clergymen of the Congregational order, but within three years last past has altogether abandoned such liberal and impartial practice of exchanges."

If the term "Congregational" designated now, as it did originally, the real or professed principles of ministers so denominated, it might be made a subject of complaint, were a Congregational minister, without special reason, to decline exchanges with ministers "of the Congregational order;" if, on the contrary, it does not now designate the real or professed principles of ministers of that order, no inference can be drawn from it concerning a minister's obligation with respect to exchanges.

Congregational is a term which has a particular reference to church government, and does not determine the religious principles of a church bearing that name. It denotes an ecclesiastical polity, peculiar to itself, as distinguished from the polity of the Episcopal Church in England, of the Lutheran Church in Germany, of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, and the Reformed Church in France, Switzerland, and Geneva. It is a term, which was adopted by the first churches of New England, to denote the reservation of rights and powers in the brethren of the church, which, in other churches, are conceded to bishops and convocations, to presbyteries and consistories. Nothing is more evident, than that a church may be, in name and in fact, Congregational, and yet essentially differ in its religious principles from other Congregational churches. The first Congregational churches of New England agreed in the principles of their faith with the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, and the Reformed Churches in Europe; but it does not hence follow, nor is it true, that all the later Congregational churches have professed the same principles.

This distinction in regard to *churches*, is strictly applicable to *ministers*, of the "Congregational order." Ministers may truly profess and maintain the ecclesiastical *polity* of the Congregational churches, while they disbelieve and discard the *religious principles* which were originally believed and professed by Congregational ministers, and which are still believed and professed by a very great proportion of the ministers of that order in New England. Such is the fact at the present time,—a fact which need not be proved, because it is openly avowed; because it is assumed as a fact by the memorialists in their addresses to me upon the subject of exchanges with ministers of the "liberal denomination," as also by the Parish in its votes and proceedings, in language too explicit to be misunderstood. If the declaration of the memorialists of their belief, that principles more liberal than ours are more rational and scriptural, were not sufficient to this purpose, the request of the Parish to exclude all ministers of the Calvinistic denomination from our pulpit, and from lectures in the Parish, places the fact beyond all question.

Ministers of the "liberal denomination," then, are by their own choice, by the memorialists, and by the Parish itself, distinguished from ministers of the Calvinistic denomination, that is to say, from ministers who essentially maintain the principles that were held by the first ministers of New England. Now, it is well known, that before and at the time of my settlement in the ministry in Cambridge, there was not a single church, nor a single minister, of the "Congregational order," in New England, that was openly and avowedly of the "liberal denomination," as the term is now used and understood. My predecessors, therefore, furnished no precedent for the case in question; for they never did exchange with ministers of the denomination that I am asked to exchange with; and the argument, erroneously drawn from their supposed example, falls to the ground.

In regard to my practice until "the last three years," if it be not remembered, it ought to be known, that for several years preceding that period, my exchanges with individual ministers, with whom I had been accustomed to exchange, had been discontinued. Such exchanges were not sought on my part, because those ministers either openly avowed the principles of the liberal denomination, or gave satisfactory evidence of their having embraced them; in some instances, they were not sought, on theirs. In these, and in later instances of such discontinuance, there was believed to be sufficient cause. Some of them may have been cases of casuistry, which the ministers concerned, and we only, could decide for ourselves. In forming my judgment, I may have erred; if I erred on the uncharitable side, it was unconsciously; if on the side of charity, "forgive me this wrong."

Respectable Congregational ministers of these different denominations, appear to consider it neither consistent on their part, nor conducive to the good of the

churches and people under their pastoral care, to exchange public services, and introduce opposite and discordant doctrines into their respective pulpits; and some of the most liberal have expressed a decided opinion, that such exchanges are not advisable. Ministers of this last description have admitted the principle of the limitation of exchanges, and have acted upon it. An instance is recollect- ed to have occurred in Boston, where a minister advanced in the pulpit religious opinions so much more liberal than those which were embraced by his brethren of that very denomination, that they discontinued their accustomed exchanges with him. The judgment of respected ministers of both the denominations referred to upon this subject, was adverted to on a former occasion ; and however parishioners may have estimated the judgment of their own Parish minister, it were to have been expected that they would have shown more regard and defer- ence to the judgment of those ministers whose religious sentiments are in accordance with their own. To what was observed on this subject, in my answer to the first memorial, I respectfully refer the Committee. What a clas- sical author said many centuries since, is applicable to this case : *Sunt certi deni- que fines*; “there are at length certain limits.” What those limits are, it may be often difficult to define or discover ; but a minister of Christ is solemnly bound to search for them by the light of the word of God ; and so far as they are made plain to him, he ought religiously to regard them.

The unreasonableness of asking or expecting a minister to have no exchanges or pastoral intercourse, with ministers of the same denomination as himself, and of the same principles which the church holds now, and always has held from its first formation, has been previously stated by your minister, who, on this point, refers you to his communication to the Parish, of the thirty-first of May. For a fair judgment in this case, he appeals to the tribunal of reason, and for precedents to all the churches in Christendom.

For the ministrations in my pulpit I acknowledge myself responsible. During the recent period within which my exchanges have been more especially ex- cepted to, I have more constantly than usual performed the services of my own pulpit. When I did exchange them, I exchanged with worthy and respectable ministers of our own principles. Had I, in accordance with the request of the Parish, discontinued all exchanges with such ministers, I should, indeed, have departed from the immemorial usage of my predecessors, and introduced an innovation, which would have justly incurred the censure, passed in your pream- ble upon me and my brethren in the christian ministry. The characters of those ministers who have preached for us, by exchange or otherwise, the last three years, are too well known and respected, to require from me either apology or vindication.

It ought to be observed, that in the copy of the vote communicated to me, the statement of the numbers voting, is no criterion of the state of the Parish in relation to the main question. The vote, I am well informed, was understood to be taken upon the preamble ; and it was upon that understanding of the motion, that the minority voted. Nor did those parishioners who disapproved the measures proposed in the notices for this Parish meeting, and for the pre- ceding meetings subsequent to the first, make any effort to collect their whole number ; on the contrary, it was their prevailing opinion, that it was not expedi- ent for more to attend, than a competent number to sustain the memorials and remonstrances. This, I am assured, is also true with respect to the number of names subscribed to the memorial presented by parishioners to the Parish, at its last meeting. No effort was made to obtain the signatures of all who had expressed their disapprobation of the measures of the Parish.

The church is well united. The votes at a church meeting, for presenting a memorial to the Parish, respecting a mutual council, and at a subsequent meet- ing, for an address to the pastor, approving his proceedings, and his minis- trations, were nearly unanimous. The remonstrants of the seventeenth of May having expressed their opinion, that “ were the females of the *Parish* allowed to speak, a majority of them would entreat you to forbear ; ”—the pastor may be permitted to subjoin an opinion, that, were the females of the *Church*, amounting to nearly eighty, allowed to speak, much more would they use the same lan- guage. In estimating our religious state, the feelings and principles of so con- siderable a portion of our stated religious assemblies, may not be overlooked.

While on the subject of the interior and general state of the church and society under my pastoral care, I feel bound to say, that, so far from finding

causes of discouragement in my ministry, during three or four of the last years, I have found very much to encourage me. The public services of the Sabbath, it has appeared to me, have been attended by greater numbers, and with more solemnity. The last of these encouraging circumstances has been repeatedly observed by ministers from abroad, occasionally preaching here. It was this, with other indications of more than ordinary attention to the concerns of religion, that induced me to have meetings in the week time, as we had previously had occasionally, for thirty years. The design of these meetings was, to promote the unity and extension of the Church, and the improvement of its members in exemplary virtue and piety; to instruct and assist the inquiring; and to encourage all who were disposed to attend them. The number of attendants was, in a short time, so large, that it was found necessary to transfer the meetings from a private dwelling-house to the court-house. There, for the same religious purposes, lectures were held; and they were so frequented, as to encourage their continuance to this time. During this period, a divine blessing appears to have attended our stated and occasional ministrations. The Church, now consisting of nearly one hundred members, has received considerable additions, and there are encouraging indications of its enlargement. Had the pastor disregarded the peculiar state of his flock at the time referred to; had he declined to meet the thoughtful and inquiring at any other time than on the Sabbath, or in any other place than in that of our stated solemnities; had he, out of the house of God, forbore all such religious exercises as he believed to be adapted, with the divine blessing, to bring serious inquirers, especially the young, "to the knowledge of the truth, that they might be saved;"—he would not have acted the part of a faithful shepherd; and if, through his unfaithfulness or neglect, any of his flock had perished, their blood would have been required at his hand by the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. Had he, above all, discontenanced and opposed such religious inquiries, and such instructive and devotional exercises, as the case appeared evidently to require, and closed or obstructed the gate of the church to those who were "not far from the kingdom of God;" he would have incurred the "wo" pronounced by our divine Lord upon those faithless guides in the Jewish Church, who "took away the key of knowledge," and "shut up the kingdom of heaven against men;" who "entered not in themselves, nor suffered them who were entering, to go in."

With this presentation of facts, too important to be concealed, and of explanations too material to be suppressed, I am entirely ready and disposed for a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council. It ought, however, to be a regular council, called and organized according to the immemorial usage of the churches of New England. To such a council it is, in my view, necessary that the Church under my pastoral care be represented. The Church, of their own accord, have asserted their right to have a part in a transaction of such importance, as the calling of a council for the purposes proposed by the Parish. They claim it by having been "a party in the settlement of the pastor;" by the ancient and general usage of Churches and Parishes, to act in concert in the settlement and removal of a minister;—particularly by the invariable usage of this Church; and by the terms of the act, incorporating the trustees of the ministry fund in this Parish, requiring the appropriation of the avails to such Congregational minister as shall be regularly ordained and settled in the Parish, "by the joint concurrence of the inhabitants and the church thereof." At the same time, the Church, in a spirit of kindness and conciliation, have, in their memorial, expressed themselves "as desirous as any of the Parish can feel, to adopt such measures as will tend to bring about an amicable adjustment of all difficulties,—Provided, that the other inhabitants of said Parish, according to general usage, unite with said Church and their pastor, in calling a mutual council." A respectable number of parishioners, some of whom are not members of the Church, have, in a memorial presented to the Parish, the same view of the subject, and expressed their desire that the Church may be represented in the proposed Council.

Called as I was into the ministry here, by the distinct and separate, yet concurrent invitation of the Church and of the Parish, and feeling, as I do and ought to feel, a solemn responsibility for my pastoral care of the Church, as well as for a sacred regard to its rights and privileges, I am not at liberty either to overlook or to interfere with its equitable claims.

To the proposal of the Parish for a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council, if regularly called, according to the usage of our churches, and to the express desires of the

Church and of other respected parishioners, no member of the Church or Parish more readily consents than

Your Pastor,

Cambridge, 28 January, 1829.

A. HOLMES.

In the preceding paper, it is stated by Dr. Holmes, that

"It ought to be observed, that in the copy of the vote communicated to me, the statement of the numbers voting is no criterion of the state of the Parish in relation to the main question. The vote, I am well informed, was understood to be taken upon the preamble; and it was upon that understanding of the motion that the minority voted."

In reply to the statements here made, we cannot forbear observing, that we know of no better "criterion," by which to ascertain "the state of the Parish," in relation to the proposition before them, than the votes actually given by those present, and acting at the meeting. How it could have been "understood," that "the vote was to be taken on the *preamble*," we cannot perceive. There was considerable discussion as to the merits of the preamble and the propriety of adopting it; and before the question was taken, the vote, appointing a committee to propose a Mutual Council, &c. as *adopted*, was written on the paper, containing the preamble, and immediately following the same, and the whole—preamble and motion—was then read and offered as a *distinct proposition*, for the consideration of the meeting. The question, thus distinctly stated, was immediately followed by the vote, on which *fifty-five* were for the affirmative, and *fourteen* for the negative. From the above statement of facts, and we challenge a denial of them, let it be decided, whether the friends of Dr. Holmes could have *misunderstood* the proposition before them.

We were a little surprised at the declaration that the "parishioners, who disapproved the measures proposed," for that "meeting," and the "preceding meetings subsequent to the first," made no "*effort to collect their whole number*"; we had not before imagined that any exertions, in any stage of the controversy, from the presentation of the first memorial, to the meeting referred to, to enlist, embody, and bring into action, *all who could be brought* to act with the minority, were forborne. In respect to obtaining signatures to remonstrances, and procuring attendance at parochial meetings, the leaders of the minority are not liable to the imputation of want of zeal or perseverance.

To the preceding communication, on the 9th of February last, the Committee transmitted to Dr. Holmes, the following reply :

Rev. Dr. Holmes, Sir,

The Committee were happy to find by your reply to their communication, received the 28th ult. that you acquiesced in their proposal for a mutual council; though you seemed to consider that a council would not be regularly called without the intervention of the Church.

You must be aware, Sir, that this subject was fully discussed at the last Parish meeting, and it was then decided, by a very large majority, that the Parish could not consider the Church as a party in this affair. Deriving our authority from the Parish, we must of course be governed by their decision, and we have no power of proposing a Mutual Council, except on the terms prescribed by their vote. Had we the power, however, we do not hesitate to state, that our principles would not permit us to adopt any other course, than that prescribed by the Parish.

We are at a loss, Sir, to conceive how the Church can act as a party in this case. They have no grounds of complaint against the pastor; on the contrary, they have declared, by the report of their committee, at their last church meeting, that they fully approved of his conduct. Neither have they any complaint against the Parish.

We hope, therefore, Sir, that you will reconsider your former opinion on this subject, and, if you are then disposed to meet our proposal for a mutual council, on the only terms which the vote of the Parish permits us to offer you, we will then thank you, Sir, to name the number you wish the council to consist of, or to appoint an early day to confer with us on the subject. Whatever you may decide on, we have to request that your answer may be explicit and conclusive.

If, Sir, we have not replied to the statements in your answer, it is because we considered they had been fully discussed in the previous communications between yourself and the Parish, and a majority of the parishioners, at divers times, and if there was any new matter introduced, we could not see its bearing on the business before us, which was simply, to propose to you a mutual council. If, Sir, you should think proper to avail yourself of the statements made in your answer on any future occasion, we shall be ready to meet them with the consideration they merit, whether before a mutual council, or any other tribunal.

Respectfully, Sir, in behalf of the Committee,

Cambridge, Feb. 9th, 1829.

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE, Clerk,

On the 14th of February the Committee were presented with the following answer.

To the Committee appointed to propose to the Pastor a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council.

GENTLEMEN,

A regular Ecclesiastical Council, it is to be presumed, is what we mutually desire. Of what is necessary to the formation of such a council, I have already given you my deliberate opinion, and the reasons for it. The consent to a regular mutual council, as expressed in my last communication to you, is believed to be clear and explicit; and I refer you to that paper, as containing the answer of,

Gentlemen,

Yours respectfully,

Cambridge, 14 Feb. 1829.

A. HOLMES.

This was followed, on the 9th of March, by a communication from the Committee to Dr. Holmes, which is here given.

To the Rev. Dr. Holmes, Pastor of the Church in the First Parish in Cambridge,

SIR,

An attested copy of the record of the votes, passed by the inhabitants of said Parish, at their meeting, held on the 22d day of December, 1828, was transmitted to you by the Clerk of said Parish, very soon after that meeting. We presume that you perfectly understood from examining those votes, that said Parish had determined to propose to you a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, for the purposes mentioned in said votes, and, on the memorial of your Church, mentioned in one of said votes, had refused to grant the prayer in that memorial, that the Church might be admitted as a party in electing that council, and in the trial before it. In our first communication to you, as a Committee of said Parish, for the purposes mentioned in said votes, among other things, we requested you to inform us, whether you would agree to join with us in electing a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, for the purposes above mentioned, and we anticipated receiving from you a plain and positive answer, that you would, or would not, join us, in the election of such a council, as we proposed to you; in the choice of which your Church would not be recognised as a party. Instead of giving us a definite answer, in relation to the council proposed by us, in your answer, dated Jan. 28th, 1829, you have written a dissertation to show what is a regular Ecclesiastical Council, and that your Church has a right to be a party in electing such council and in the trial before it, and that you are ready to agree to a regular Ecclesiastical Council, according to your definition or description of it; but you wholly omitted to answer our inquiry, and in your answer, you have not said, that you would, or would not, join us, in electing such a council, as we, pursuant to said votes, had proposed to you. Since the receipt of your answer above mentioned, in our communication, addressed to you, dated the 9th Feb. A. D. 1829, we stated to you, among other things, that your Church could not be admitted as a party in relation to the proposed council, and gave you our reasons for rejecting the Church as such party, and requested you to inform us, whether you, without your Church, would concur with us, in electing such mutual Ecclesiastical Council, as we had proposed to you. In your reply to the last mentioned communication, made by us to you, which reply is dated, Feb. 14th, 1829, you decline giving an answer, such as we re-

quested in our last mentioned communication to you, and refer us to "the consent to a regular mutual council, as exprssed in" your then "last communication to us." That consent is confined strictly "to a regular mutual council" according to your said definition, or description, of it; and we think it impossible for you, Sir, or any other person, to find in the communication to which you have referred us, for your answer, any answer to the inquiry we made of you, and you have not yet told us, whether you, without your Church, will, or will not, concur with us, in electing such mutual council, as we proposed to you, as aforesaid, pursuant to the aforesaid votes. We proposed to you a mutual council, to be elected by you and by us, as such committee as aforesaid; you have stated to us, that, in your opinion, "a regular mutual Ecclesiastical Council must be elected by you, by us, as such committee, and by your Church, and we proposed to you a council to be elected in the former mode, and you have expressed to us your consent to a council to be elected in the latter mode; that is, we proposed to you one subject, and you confined your answer to another. When you shall have re-examined your communications to us, we presume that you will be willing to inform us, in the most perspicuous and definite manner, whether you, without your Church, will, or will not, meet us, as such committee as aforesaid, and concur with us, in electing a mutual Ecclesiastical Council for the purposes above mentioned. If you conclude, Sir, to concur with us in electing such mutual council, as we have proposed to you, as soon as you shall have communicated to us your consent to that, we will, as soon as practicable, propose to you the time and place of a meeting for that purpose.

At a meeting of the committee of the First Parish in Cambridge, appointed on the 22d day of Dec. last past, held March 5, 1829, it was voted, that a copy of the foregoing communication be transmitted to Rev. Dr. Holmes.

Attest,

WILLIAM J WHIPPLE,

Clerk of said Committee.

On the 14th of March Dr. Holmes communicated to the Committee the following answer:

To the Committee of the First Parish in Cambridge.

GENTLEMEN,

It has uniformly been my intention to give an affirmative answer, and no other, to the proposal of the Parish for a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, "if regularly called, according to the usage of our churches, and to the express desires of the church and other respected parishioners." If my answer was not fair and equitable, I have yet to learn the first principles of moral and religious obligation; if it is not clear and intelligible, I despair of making it so by note or comment. It was such an answer as, in my apprehension, any pastor of a church, having a proper sense of his obligations to his church and people, and to the divine Head of the church, would feel himself bound to give; and if the committee do not receive it, they "interfere with" my "convictions of duty and rights of conscience." I must, therefore, again refer you, Gentlemen of the committee, to my communication of the 28th of January, for the answer of

Yours respectfully,

Cambridge, 14 March, 1829.

A. HOLMES.

The correspondence between the parties was continued as follows, *viz.*

COMMITTEE TO DR. HOLMES.

To the Rev. Dr. Holmes, Pastor of the First Parish in Cambridge.

SIR,

The committee, appointed by said Parish to propose to you a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, met yesterday, and *Voted*, to request you to inform them, in *what way and manner*, and in *what degree*, you consider said Parish bound, by the general ecclesiastical usage, to unite with your Church, in relation to the proposed council, both as to the election of that council, and the hearing of our case before it. The Church have claimed rights, in relation to the proposed council, and you have made a corresponding claim, in their behalf, but that claim has not been defined in their memorial to said Parish, nor in the communications, which we have received from you. You, Sir, have stated to us, that the concurrence of your Church is necessary to the regularity of the proposed council; but you have not stated to us in what that concurrence consists. You will oblige us by informing us definitely what are the rights, claimed by your Church, in this case, to which you consider them entitled by said usage; whether they have a right

in the election of said council, and what right; whether they, separately from you, claim a right to elect members of such council ; or whether you and they act together in the election and jointly elect only one half of the members of such council ; or whether you, and they, together, acting jointly or separately, claim a right to elect two thirds of said members ; and whether, in the hearing before the proposed council, they claim a right only to act jointly with you, or a right to appear and act separately from you and the Parish. It appears to be important, at this time, that the committee of the Parish and your Church should understand accurately what are the particular rights claimed by your Church, in relation to the proposed council, so far as they wish, or intend, to act as a Church, separately from the Parish.

Per order of said Committee,

Cambridge, March 18, 1829.

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE.

REPLY.

To the Committee of the First Parish in Cambridge.

GENTLEMEN,

Your last communication to me, containing interrogatories concerning the Church, was communicated to the Church, and the Church's committee, to whom it was referred, made the enclosed report, which was unanimously adopted. Addressed as it is to me, with liberty to make such use of it as I might think proper, I transmit it to you, Gentlemen, and am,

Yours respectfully,

Cambridge, 26 March, 1829.

A. HOLMES.

COPY OF THE REPORT ABOVE REFERRED TO AS " ENCLOSED " IN THE FOREGOING.

The First Church in Cambridge to their Rev. and Beloved Pastor, A. Holmes, D. D.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

The communication made to you, on the 18th of this month, by the Parish committee appointed to confer with you upon the calling of a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council, and laid before us by you, on the 22d of this month, has been duly considered.

We are not aware, Sir, of more than one way in which the only question in that communication, which is material, and requiring present attention, could have been answered by you, had you felt authorized to reply to it. But as your office of pastor does not oblige, or even empower you so to do, without first advising with the church,—as questions *incidental* to our *rights* are contained in the communication, and you are desired to go into particular definitions and explanations of these incidental matters, and of whatever may be included in our claim to have a concurrent voice in the calling of a mutual ecclesiastical council, and as you are requested to state in what 'way' the Church, in the exercise of its rights, may see fit to appear before that council, and in what "manner and degree" to present and urge those rights, the propriety and expediency of your laying the communication before us, and of our addressing you at this time, are perfectly obvious.

In the memorial of this Church, presented at the Parish meeting of the 22d of December last, the Church goes upon its *right* to a concurrent voice in the calling of a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council, and does not simply, or mainly, take the course of "suggesting the *expediency* of such concurrence," as stated in the record of the doings of that meeting ; of which fact, however, the Parish committee seem now aware, as in this, their last communication to you, now before us, they say, "The Church have claimed rights in relation to the proposed council, and you have made a corresponding claim on their behalf ;" which remark must refer to the before mentioned memorial, as it is the only communication ever made by the Church to the Parish.

Our memorial, then, being sufficiently distinct upon this point, even had we supposed the Parish thought our right to include larger powers than it actually did include, and, therefore, considered by them a greater obstacle in their way, than it in fact was, we should have esteemed it indecorous towards the Parish, to have entered into explanations, as inducements with them to allow us the

free exercise of our mere right ; for this would have been presupposing a willingness on their part to weigh expediency against principle.

It was not necessary, therefore, and it would hardly have been proper, along with the simple assertion of our existence as a Church having a right to a concurrent voice in the calling of a council, to have gone into all the definitions of that right, or the "way, manner, and degree," in which it might be thought best that right should be exercised.

In relation to the questions put to you in the communication before us, it will be recollected, Sir, that the Parish have hitherto refused to acknowledge our existence as a body having any concern in the matters now in agitation—that they even declined recognising us so far as to allow our memorial to them, urging our right, to go upon the Parish files. And, Sir, in the communications of the Parish committee to you, which at the request of our committee, you have obligingly submitted to our perusal, that we might act more understandingly upon the subject, we find it said in that of the 9th of February last,—“ You must be aware, Sir, that this subject was fully discussed at the last Parish meeting, and it was then decided, by a very large majority, that the Parish could not consider the Church as a party to this affair. Deriving our authority from the Parish, we must of course be governed by their decisions, and we have no power of proposing a mutual council, except on the terms prescribed by their vote. Had we the power, however, we do not hesitate to state that our principles would not permit us to adopt any other course than that prescribed by the Parish.” And in their communication made so late as the 5th of the present month, referring you to the above communication, they continue,—“ In our communication addressed to you, dated the 9th of February, A. D. 1829, we stated to you among other things, that your Church could not be admitted as a party, in relation to the proposed council, and gave you our reasons for rejecting the Church as such party.”

Under these circumstances, it would evidently be a sufficient reply, Sir, to the questions from the Parish committee, to inquire for what object they could be put, or to what purpose they could be answered, so long as the very existence of the body, as to the subject to which they relate, is not admitted by the Parish or by the very committee putting the questions, but, on the contrary, has been distinctly denied by both,—and while, too, the Parish committee declare they are not authorized by the Parish to recognise the church?

But, Sir, anxious as we are, and ever have been, that all occasion of delay or difficulty should be taken out of the way, we prefer passing by this very peculiar state of the circumstances, and going into the subject, so far as we can with any propriety at this time.

We are at a loss to conjecture how the Parish committee could ever have imagined that church *rights* and *usages* could give to any church a power which would take from the complaining party a right of *equal* representation in a mutual ecclesiastical council, and how our claim to a *concurrent* voice with one of the parties in the calling of such council, could ever have been supposed by them to be the assertion of a right to deprive them of their one half of such representation. To us it seems to contradict the very term *mutual*; and were it not that the question has been just put to you by that committee with so apparent seriousness, had we inquired of them, whether they entertained such an opinion, we should have looked for no other answer, than a mere expression of surprise. And it is with the greatest difficulty that we can bring ourselves to believe, that either you or we should have been thought to have laid claim to such powers and rights. We cannot find that either of us, in speaking of our several rights, has used expressions that could lead to so singular a supposition. On the other hand, so far as our language may at all relate to the point, it implies the contrary, and asks no more than a *concurrent* voice with *one* of the parties; and we have, of necessity, from the beginning, and till this last communication of the Parish committee, considered the language of both Parish and committee to be—“ We neither acknowledge nor know any church in this matter.” If, then, the committee have labored under such a mistake, we have only to regret that it should have been brought to light, for the first time, at this late day; and we shall regret its late disclosure still more, if it has, in fact, been the occasion of delay in settling difficulties which both you and we have long sincerely desired to have brought regularly and speedily to a close. As to the remaining questions proposed by the Parish committee, it appears to us that they relate to matters of

merely mutual agreement and accommodation, and not at all to concern the right of the church to a concurrent voice in the calling of a mutual ecclesiastical council, and that answers to them must, more or less, take their character from the course which the Parish committee may see fit to pursue in their future proceedings. It would, therefore, be untimely and improper to reply to them here. We would remind you, Sir, that the committee (of which Deacon Hilliard is chairman) chosen by the Church, on the 21st of December last, to present our memorial, herein referred to, which was laid before the Parish meeting on the 22d of the same month, were constituted with full powers to enter into agreements and to make all necessary arrangements with the Parish, or its committee, in relation to the calling of a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council, and that they are still a committee for that purpose.

We must close, Sir, with saying, that if the Parish committee shall, at any time, express to us a readiness to communicate with us as a church having a concurrent voice in the calling of a mutual ecclesiastical council, they will find us with the same feelings and views as we declared ourselves to entertain, in our memorial to the Parish, and ready, through our committee, to join with them, in so far as said Parish committee is authorized, in doing all in our power to bring subsisting difficulties to a regular and proper close, and that at as little expense, and in as short a time as possible, and in a true spirit of accommodation.

With liberty to make such use of this communication as you may deem fitting and expedient, we remain respectfully yours,

WILLIAM HILLIARD,	}	Committee.
JAMES MUNROE,		
RICHARD H. DANA,		
S. F. SAWYER,		
JONA. C. PRENTISS,		

Cambridge, March 24th, 1829.

COMMITTEE TO DR. HOLMES.

To the Rev. Dr. Holmes, Pastor of the First Parish in Cambridge.

SIR,—We, the committee of said Parish, have received your letter of the 26th of March last, enclosing a communication to you from the Church in this Parish, as your answer to our letter to you of the 18th of that month.

Our last communication to you was suggested by a desire, on our part, to avoid a misunderstanding of the views, entertained by you, respecting the rights and agency, to which you considered said Church entitled, in the election of the mutual ecclesiastical council, proposed by us, as such committee, to you, as pastor of said Parish, for the purpose of terminating the difficulties between you and said Parish.

In the communication of said Church to you, which you have sent to us, as your answer, it is said, that said church claims "no more than a concurrent voice with one of the parties." If by this is meant, that the church is not to be considered, in itself, a party, in relation to said proposed Council and to the case between you and said Parish, proposed for the consideration and decision of said council, but only claims a right to be consulted by you, as its minister, and to give its advice, when asked, or to furnish assistance to you, when its aid is requested by you, in relation to the election of that council, or in any other matter, said Parish has no inclination, nor any right, probably, to object. To us, as such committee of said Parish, is certainly not committed the power, or right, of determining of whom you, Rev. Sir, shall take either advice, or assistance. In your communication of the 14th of March last to this committee, you say, "it has been uniformly my intention to give an affirmative answer, and no other, to the proposal of the Parish for a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council, 'if regularly called according to the usage of our churches, and to the express desires of the Church and other respected parishioners.'"

We, as such committee as aforesaid, have already several times proposed to you, Rev. Sir, a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council, to be elected by us, as such committee of said Parish, on one part, and by you, as such pastor as aforesaid, on the other, for the purposes heretofore expressed in said proposals and above mentioned; and we anticipated, Sir, that you would, without doubt, or hesita-

tion, inform us, whether you would accept said proposal by us, or whether you declined accepting it.

We, as such Committee as aforesaid of said Parish, now repeat and renew our former proposals to you, for such Mutual Ecclesiastical Council, for the purposes expressed in said proposals, and above mentioned; to be elected as lastly above mentioned; *you and said Parish* being the *only parties* to the same; and respectfully request you to give us an explicit answer to this renewed proposal.

We, as such Committee, as aforesaid, are ready to meet you, at any convenient time and place to be named by you, for the purpose of electing the Council herein proposed to you, if you accede to the proposal; but if you decline it, we, as such Committee, as aforesaid, shall, as soon as convenient, in discharge of our duty to said Parish, elect and call an *ex parte* Council, for the purposes aforesaid, that the complaints of said Parish against you may be fully heard and considered by such Council, and their result be obtained thereon.

Per order of said Committee,

Cambridge, April 1, 1829.

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE.

DR. HOLMES TO THE COMMITTEE.

To the Committee of the First Parish in Cambridge.

GENTLEMEN,

The paper which I last enclosed to you relating to your interrogatories concerning the rights of the Church, was not, as you have entitled it, *my answer* to those interrogatories, but the statement of the Church. The Church have asserted their right to take a part in the proposed measure of a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, and assigned their reasons; and with their rights, as I early observed to you, I am not at liberty to interfere. By the paper lately transmitted to you, Gentlemen, you distinctly perceive that the Church have never claimed a right, that would interfere with your right to elect one half of the proposed Council. This, it appears, was the only thing which the Church considered as essential to be stated, in reply to your inquiries.

The doubtful manner in which—in your letter of April 1st—you speak of what may be meant by a concurrent voice of the Church, rendered it proper for me, in order to avoid a misunderstanding of their views, to communicate your letter to the Committee of the Church. The answer of the Committee, though addressed to me, properly belongs to you, Gentlemen, and to you I accordingly enclose it. I have only to observe upon it, that the proposal of the Church respecting the calling of a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, contained in the enclosed paper, meets my approbation; and that, in accordance with it, I am prepared, at any time, to unite with the Committee of the Parish in calling such a Council.

If in this procedure, Gentlemen of the Committee, you are not authorized to recognise the Church, your constituents, if they see fit, can doubtless give you such authority. I therefore request you to communicate to the Parish my Answer of the 28th of January, with the enclosed, for their consideration, and am

Gentlemen,

Yours, respectfully,

A. HOLMES.

Cambridge, 8 April, 1829.

COPY OF THE PAPER ENCLOSED IN THE PRECEDING LETTER.

To the Rev. Dr. Holmes, Pastor of the First Church in Cambridge.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

You having laid before us a communication from the Parish Committee to you, bearing date the 1st of this month, in consequence of the Committee's having, in that communication, expressed a doubt as to the meaning of that part of our letter to you of the 24th of March last, in which we claim a right to a concurrent voice with one of the parties in the calling of a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council—in order to put our meaning beyond all doubt in the minds of that Committee, we beg leave to observe, that we did mean more than the language of the Committee seems to imply, when they say,—“In the communication of said Church to you, which you have sent to us, as your answer, it is said, that

said Church claims 'no more than a concurrent voice with one of the parties.' If by this is meant, that the Church is not to be considered, in itself, a party, in relation to said proposed Council, and to the case between you and said Parish, proposed for the consideration and decision of said Council, but only claims a right to be consulted by you, as its minister, and to give its advice, when asked, or to furnish assistance to you, when its aid is requested by you, in relation to the election of that Council, or in any other matter, said Parish has no inclination, nor any right, probably, to object. To us, as such Committee of said Parish, is certainly not committed the power, or right, of determining of whom you, Rev. Sir, shall take either advice or assistance."

And we, the Church Committee, would now state, on the point of the calling of a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council, that the Church claim that their committee, in concurrence with you, their pastor, should select, with you, one half of the Council, the Parish Committee selecting the other half. And to make our meaning perfectly clear, we would further say, that, as to the mode of calling said Council, the church would be satisfied, if the half selected by you and the Church Committee, be invited by letters signed by you, as pastor, and the Church Committee, and the half selected by the Parish Committee, be invited by letters signed by the Parish Committee, or, if the Parish Committee prefer it, that all selected (including those selected by you and the Church Committee, on the one part, and those selected by the Parish Committee, on the other part) be invited by letters signed unitedly by you, as Pastor, by the Church Committee, and by the Parish Committee.

With liberty to make such use of this letter as you may deem proper, we remain,

Rev. and Dear Sir, Yours,

WILLIAM HILLIARD, JAMES MUNROE, RICHARD H. DANA, SAMUEL F. SAWYER, JONA. C. PRENTISS.	} Committee of the Church.
---	-------------------------------------

Cambridge, April 7th, 1829.

THE COMMITTEE TO DR. HOLMES.

To the Rev. Dr. Holmes, Pastor of the First Parish in Cambridge.

SIR,—The Committee of said Parish have received your communication of the 8th of April instant, enclosing a communication to you from a Committee of the First Church in Cambridge, under date of the 7th of said month.

After the repeated attempts on the part of the Parish Committee to obtain from you an explicit and direct reply to their proposition for a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council, they confidently expected a definite and decisive answer to their communication of April 1st.

After their explicit declaration under the last mentioned date, they consider you as refusing to agree to their proposal for such Council; and, agreeably to their statement in their last communication to you, they will proceed to the choice of an *ex parte* Council, to hear and decide on the complaints of the Parish.

They decline applying to the Parish for a grant of further authority to the Committee, because the claim of the Church to be a party in calling a Council has been already very fully discussed, deliberately considered, and decided by the Parish,—and because they believe there is nothing in either or both of the papers you wish communicated, to induce the Parish to alter their decision so fully expressed on this subject.

Per order of the Committee of said Parish,

Cambridge, April 13th, 1829.

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE.

On a view and accurate examination of the foregoing correspondence between the Committee and Dr. Holmes, relative to the Mutual Ecclesiastical Council several times proposed to him by the Committee, to be elected by the Committee, in behalf of the Parish, on one part, and by Dr. Holmes, on the other part; the intelligent, candid, and impartial members of the community will easily decide, whether it is

not true, that Dr. Holmes refused to join said Committee in the election of such Council, in the manner proposed to him?

The law will undoubtedly examine and consider not only all the words, but all the actions and omissions of Dr. Holmes, connected with said correspondence, and fully understand them, according to the principles of reason and the rules of law, and will decide the above question concerning Dr. Holmes' refusal, upon a fair and full understanding of all the facts and circumstances of the case. Dr. Holmes will not be permitted to give to his language and actions, or omissions, a meaning invented by himself, and peculiar to his own mind, and such as neither the Committee, nor any other persons, could understand from them, or would have a right to attach to them. If a proposal is made to a man, the modes in which he can refuse or neglect to accept that proposal, are extremely numerous; and the particular mode is unimportant, if it, on the whole, amounts to a refusal or neglect. The refusal may be by words, actions, or omissions.

If the reader, on examining Dr. Holmes' papers, included in this pamphlet, should entertain a shadow of doubt concerning the Doctor's opinion of the rights of churches, as to the election &c. of pastors, Dr. Holmes' Convention Sermon, delivered before the Convention, in Boston, May 27th, 1819, contains his opinions, arguments, &c. in relation to those rights. How far Dr. Holmes harmonises with "our State Constitution," and with the decisions of our Supreme Judicial Court, will be seen by reading pages 32, 33, and 34 of that sermon.

ELECTION OF EX PARTE COUNCIL.

At a meeting of the Committee of the First Parish in Cambridge, appointed on the 22d of December, 1829, in relation to an Ecclesiastical Council, held April 16th, 1829:—

Whereas the Rev. Dr. Holmes has refused to accept the proposal for a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council made to him by this Committee, pursuant to authority from said Parish,

Voted, That the Committee now proceed to elect an *ex parte* Council to hear and advise in relation to the controversies and difficulties existing between the Rev. Dr. Holmes and said Parish.

Voted, That said Council be composed of a Pastor and Delegate from each of seven Churches.

Voted, That letters missive, signed by the Committee, be addressed to
 The Church in Concord under the pastoral care of Rev. Ezra Ripley, D. D.
 The Church in Worcester " " Rev. Aaron Bancroft, D. D.
 The Church in Lancaster " " Rev. Nathaniel Thayer, D. D.
 The Church in Roxbury " " Rev. Eliphalet Porter, D. D.
 The Church in Salem " " Rev. James Flint, D. D.
 The Church in Portland " " Rev. Ichabod Nichols, D. D.
 The Church in Portsmouth " " Rev. Nathan Parker, D. D.

requesting the attendance of said Churches, by their Pastor and a Delegate from each, as members of an Ecclesiastical Council, to be held on the 19th day of May next.

Attest,

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
 Clerk of said Committee.

Pursuant to said vote, letters missive were addressed, on the 16th of April, 1829, by said committee, to the several gentlemen named in said vote, requesting the attendance of the several churches therein named, by the pastor and a delegate from each church, as members

of an Ecclesiastical Council, to be held at the Old Court House in the First Parish in Cambridge, on Tuesday, the nineteenth day of May, A. D. 1829, at 10 o'clock, A. M., for the purposes mentioned in said vote.

On the 9th of May, 1829, the committee made the following

COMMUNICATION TO DR. HOLMES.

To the Rev. Dr. Holmes, Pastor of the First Parish in Cambridge.

SIR,—I am directed by the committee of said Parish to make known to you that said committee have elected and invited the Rev. Dr. Ripley of Concord, Rev. Dr. Thayer of Lancaster, Rev. Dr. Bancroft of Worcester, Rev. Dr. Porter of Roxbury, Rev. Dr. Flint of Salem, Rev. Dr. Parker of Portsmouth, and Rev. Dr. Nichols of Portland, together with a delegate from each of their respective churches, to compose an *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council, to assemble at the Old Court House in Cambridge, on the nineteenth day of May instant, at ten o'clock, A. M., for the purposes expressed in the introduction to the enclosed paper:— I am also directed to transmit to you a copy of the Complaint by said Parish, through their committee, which said committee propose to exhibit to said council—which is enclosed herein. Very respectfully,

Your obed't serv't,

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,

Cambridge, May 9th, 1829.

in behalf of said Committee.

Enclosed in the last mentioned communication was a copy of the following

SPECIFICATION OF THE CAUSES OF COMPLAINT.

First Parish in Cambridge *vs.* Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D. as Pastor of said Parish.

To the Ecclesiastical Council, elected and invited by the First Parish in Cambridge, through the agency of their Committee, duly chosen and appointed by said Parish for that purpose, to hear, and advise in relation to the controversies and difficulties existing between said Parish and the Rev. Dr. Holmes, their Pastor, in relation to his pastoral conduct in said Parish:—

Said committee feel a great responsibility, in executing the authority given them, and in performing the duties, assigned them by said Parish. They are deeply impressed by the conviction, that the peace, harmony, and prosperity, the infinitely important moral and religious rights and duties, of said Parish, absolutely require, that the various causes of complaint, which said Parish conceive they have, in a legal, moral, and religious view, against their said Pastor, should be impartially and fully considered, and, if possible, remedied, or removed and brought to a wise and speedy termination, or that the pastoral relation of the Rev. Dr. Holmes to said Parish should be dissolved. Said Parish, in the preamble to their vote passed the 22d day of December, A.D. 1828, by which they determined to appoint said committee, have stated, in general terms, some of the principal causes of complaint, against their said Pastor, and reserved the right to assign, by said committee, other causes of complaint against him. In the performance of their said duties, it appears to said committee, that they are bound to allege all the causes of complaint by said Parish against their pastor, which they consider of sufficient magnitude to be productive of any serious evil in the Parish; and they, therefore, for the sake of convenient method, allege again the causes of complaint, mentioned in said preamble, and some additional causes of complaint, not specified in that preamble, to which this writing is intended to be added, and to be used in connexion therewith.

And said committee, in behalf of said Parish, pursuant to the authority given them by said Parish, now allege the following causes of complaint by said Parish against the Rev. Dr. Holmes, as their pastor, *to wit*:

1. The great innovation, exhibited by said pastor, in his practice in relation to ministerial exchanges.

During more than thirty years from his instalment as Pastor in said Parish, he exchanged charitably and impartially with the Congregational ministers, within a convenient distance from said Cambridge, and in Cambridge, as well with those whom he knew to be of the liberal denomination, as with Calvinists; but, within the three or four years last past, without consulting his parishioners, without giving them any express or definite notice of his intention to alter his practice in relation to such exchanges, in opposition to his own former practice, to that of his predecessors, and to the principles, taste, and wishes of a great majority of his parishioners, he has adopted, and strictly adhered to, the Calvinistic exclusive system, has exchanged with Calvinists, or self-styled orthodox preachers, only, and entirely excluded clergymen of the liberal denomination from our pulpit, and thereby reduced a great majority of said parishioners to the necessity of leaving the meeting-house of said Parish, in which they have a legal right, and where they have been accustomed to attend public worship, or of hearing only that kind of theology, which they sincerely believe to be mixed with much erroneous theory and mere human invention, equally opposed to sound and enlightened reason, and to a true interpretation and correct understanding of divine revelation.

2. The Rev. Dr. Holmes, as pastor of said Parish, introduced into said Parish, lectures, by Calvinists, from other Parishes and religious societies, on Sabbath evenings, and on one other evening in the week, contrary to his own former practice during more than thirty years from the commencement of his ministry in this Parish, and contrary to the general, immemorial practice of his predecessors, who have been ministers in said Parish; which lectures he so introduced without consulting his Parish, without their approbation, and in opposition to their religious principles, and to the peace, harmony, and moral and religious good of his parishioners.

Said lectures were generally Calvinistic, and many of them, although called lectures on the Bible, were not only Calvinistic and Trinitarian, but highly partisan; and, beyond all reasonable doubt in our minds, intended, by said pastor, to propagate the peculiar principles of Calvinism in said Parish, and to proselyte the liberal part of the parishioners, to that harsh, unreasonable, and unscriptural creed.

3. After the Rev. Dr. Holmes had adopted said exclusive system in his pastoral exchanges, as aforesaid, and had, for a considerable period, confined his parishioners to preaching by Calvinists, or ministers calling themselves orthodox, a large majority of the parishioners by their divers written petitions to him at different times, and the Parish, as a corporation, by votes, at different times, endeavored to induce him to consent to the admission of Congregational ministers of the liberal denomination into our pulpit. Said votes were passed by very large majorities of the legal voters in said Parish, and are as follows, *to wit*:

Vote, Jan. 7th, 1828, requesting him "to exchange a reasonable proportion of the time, with such respectable clergymen of the liberal denomination, as are now pastors of the religious societies, with which the religious society in this Parish has been associated."

Votes, passed, April 5th, A. D. 1828; 1st, to request him "to consent to the election and settlement by said Parish of such a colleague as shall be satisfactory to said Parish, to co-operate with him, in the performance of the duties of a public teacher of piety, religion, and morality in said Parish." 2d, Also to request him "to assent to an invitation by said Parish, to such clergymen as they may elect to invite, to preach in the meeting-house of said Parish, on the Sabbath, not exceeding one half the time." 3d, Also to request him "to assent to an invitation by said Parish to any clergymen whom they may elect to invite to deliver lectures in the pulpit of the meeting-house in said Parish, at such times as said Parish may appoint."

Each of the above mentioned votes was made known to Dr. Holmes very soon after the same was passed, as aforesaid, by sending him an attested copy thereof. But he has negatived each of said petitions by a majority of the parishioners and each of said votes by the Parish, and perseveringly resisted all the numerous means, used at divers times and in different manners, by a great majority of the parishioners, and by the Parish, as a corporation, to induce him to permit them to hear, in the pulpit of said Parish, preachers of the liberal denom-

ination, such as they or their predecessors had always been accustomed to hear, during his ministry in this Parish, and in the time of his predecessors.

4. Said Parish, by votes, passed by a very large majority of the legal voters therein, on the seventeenth day of May, 1828, requested Dr. Holmes to discontinue the public evening lectures, in the meeting-house of said Parish and in said Parish, by clergymen of the Calvinistic denomination. Also, to discontinue his exchanges with clergymen of that denomination. Also, in case he did not comply with said requests, to ask a dismissal from his office of pastor of said Parish. But he, after having been duly notified of said last mentioned votes, and after having been fully informed, that said lectures and exchanges were opposed to the religious principles of a large majority of his parishioners, has continued such exchanges and lectures with perseverance to the present time; and has refused to ask a dismissal from his office. A very large majority of the parishioners feel much aggrieved, by the continuance of said exchanges and lectures, as they believe that they are intended by Dr. Holmes, and are adapted, to propagate in said Parish the peculiar tenets of Calvinism, according to the present Calvinistic creed; which tenets, they consider not only opposed to reason and the sacred Scriptures, but to all pure and true religion, to moral rectitude and piety; and, particularly, opposed to that charity, which is greater than faith or hope; without which pure Christianity can not exist; without which all religion is as sounding brass or a tinkling symbol.

5. The large majority of the inhabitants of the First Parish in Cambridge, who are opposed to the Rev. Dr. Holmes, fully understand, that the distinguishing tenets, commonly called the five points of Calvinism, have been disbelieved, resisted, and condemned, as unreasonable, unscriptural, and, in their tendency, injurious to true religion, from their introduction to the present time, by large numbers of men, as much distinguished and celebrated for genius, learning, wisdom, rectitude of conduct and piety, as any the world ever saw. Those tenets, which their reason, after the most careful investigation, rejects, and which appear to them to be contrary to divine revelation, they are so far from believing to be essential to Christian virtue and piety, or to salvation, that they think them entirely false and dangerous, and pernicious in their tendency; and, therefore, in no degree adapted for a standard, by which to decide on the virtue, piety, or Christian character, of those, who honestly believe that those tenets are erroneous, and who find that they cannot adopt them, without violating their own reason and the plainest principles of revealed religion. For the purpose of showing how far Dr. Holmes makes his own peculiar Calvinistic tenets, his Trinitarian theories, and his own taste an exclusive standard, and how far he is thereby induced to disregard, or oppose, the religious principles and the taste and desires of a large majority of his parishioners, said committee consider it their duty to state, that said Parish, by a large majority, on the 7th day of January, 1828, passed a vote, requesting Dr. Holmes "to reject Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns," then used in the meeting-house of said Parish, "and to substitute therefor and to use the collection of Psalms and Hymns" then used "in the Chapel of Harvard University," which request Dr. Holmes has refused. The religious principles of said majority made it appear to them a conscientious duty to pass said vote, and their taste likewise made them desirous of the substitution therein requested; as they considered said proposed collection far preferable to Watts' Psalms and Hymns, both as to religious principle and to poetry. Watts' Psalms and Hymns were considered very deficient in many parts of the poetry, in the variety of metres, and liable to the insuperable objection of containing Trinitarian theories, which Dr. Watts himself, after writing them, abandoned, on a more critical and full examination, and was very desirous of rejecting them from his book, and would have done it, if the person, to whom he had previously sold the copyright of his Psalms and Hymns, would have permitted him to do it.

6. Although our Rev. pastor has claimed immutability in his own religious theories, and has alleged a change of religious principles in the majority of his parishioners, who are opposed to him, and in the liberal ministers, with whom, or with whose predecessors, he exchanged formerly, during more than thirty years of his ministry in this Parish; yet we fully believe, that a majority of said parishioners, in the time of his immediate predecessor, the Rev. Mr. Hilliard, were, and from that time hitherto have been, so rational or liberal, in their theological creed, as to be wholly opposed to all the peculiar tenets of Calvinism, and that said liberal

ministers have not changed their religious principles, but that their principles are now substantially the same, they were, when they, or their predecessors, exchanged with Dr. Holmes and preached in our pulpit, and that, if there has been any considerable change in religious theories, or principles, it has been in Dr. Holmes and his denomination, corresponding to their change in practice, and to their extraordinary pretensions and exclusive claims in religion. We have no doubt, that it can be proved conclusively, that the Rev. Mr. Hilliard was an Unitarian; that his general system of theology was rational, scriptural, and liberal; that he fully disbelieved each of the five distinguishing tenets of Calvinism; that he was highly charitable, and very exemplary, and that he enjoyed very great harmony with his Church and Parish.

7. That Dr. Holmes, during the whole period of his ministry in this Parish, has very much neglected the important duty of making pastoral visits, in relation to a large majority of his parishioners. His visits to them have been very rare, and generally so short, and at such times, as to be of little or no value as to morality and religion. His pastoral intercourse with the parishioners has been confined within such narrow limits, that it is highly probable, that he did not know their religious principles, until his said uncharitable innovations in his pastoral practice excited great dissatisfaction and complaint in a large majority of his parishioners, and reduced them to the necessity of stating to him some of their religious principles, so far as they are opposed to his distinguishing Calvinistic tenets, and to those of his favorite preachers, in order to regain and secure their parochial, religious rights and privileges, and in order to defend those infinitely important principles of religion, to which they are conscientiously attached, and which they feel bound to support in the best manner of which they are capable. We charitably presume and admit, that said neglect of parochial visits did not arise from any corrupt motive; but from mere inattention, or from erroneous but honest theory in relation to them, or from his numerous engagements and multiplied labors in a large number of societies, associations, consociations, &c. and from his great zeal, industry, and perseverance in historical and other pursuits, and investigations.*

8. Because we feel a deep and painful conviction that our said pastor, by his great departure from that charitable, liberal, and christian practice, which he observed during more than thirty years of his ministry here, and by his inflexible perseverance in the above mentioned innovations in his pastoral conduct, has alienated the affections and lost the confidence of a large majority of his parishioners, and has wholly disqualified himself, in relation to them, for usefulness in his pastoral office; and by his firm, constant, zealous, and long continued opposition to their principles and desires, expressed, and reasonable requests made, to him, excited in their minds a determination not to hear him, as their minister, after the decision of the existing disputes between him and said Parish, and to abandon said Parish, unless they can hear in our pulpit, at least a reasonable proportion of the time, that rational theology and sound morality, which they believe to be fully supported by divine revelation and by enlightened reason; but much opposed to the distinguishing tenets of Calvinistic orthodoxy.

Therefore we greatly fear, if Dr. Holmes shall continue to be pastor of said Parish, that his innovations aforesaid, connected with his zeal, boldness, and firm resolution

* On this specification in the complaint, the publishers of the "Account," p. 39, have appended the following note:

"This charge the Council refused to consider. It is doubted whether Dr. Holmes ever had the least connexion with a consociation—never, certainly, since he became the minister of Cambridge."

The Council *did not refuse* to consider "this charge." The charge was read and several witnesses were examined to prove it. Other witnesses were present for the purpose of supporting that charge. A member of the Council inquired, whether it could be of any importance to the Parish to proceed further on that charge, which was adapted to occupy considerable time, and on consideration, the committee told the Council, that they were not solicitous to occupy the time of the Council by giving further evidence on that charge; as it was not necessary to their case, there being a sufficient number of other charges, for deciding on the merits of the controversy; and, in this state of things, the committee forbore to examine further in relation to that charge. The Council were willing to consider the charge, if the committee chose to go through with their evidence on it. This is something widely different from the statement, that, "this charge the Council refused to consider." Those, who accuse others of *misrepresentations*, should attend to their own qualifications for the business of accusation, and be very careful in their own practice.

in support of them, will, inevitably, destroy permanently the peace, harmony, and prosperity of said Parish; will greatly reduce its numbers, and do it an irreparable injury.

ABRAHAM HILLIARD,
ABEL WHITNEY,
FRANCIS DANA,
JOB WYETH,
SYLVANUS PLUMPTON,
JOSEPH HOLMES,
WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE.

Committee
of
said Parish.

Cambridge, May 8, 1829.

In the "Account," pages 39—41, the publishers say:

"Without remarking on the various misrepresentations occurring in this complaint, it is manifest on the face of it, that nothing from the first would have satisfied the leading opposers of Dr. Holmes, except his removal. Dr. Holmes is, and uniformly has been, a Calvinistic, or orthodox minister. With this fact let the reader compare the views above expressed relative to what are called, 'the tenets of Calvinism'; and let him judge for himself, whether those who entertain such views would have remained quietly, year after year, under the ministry of such a teacher. Would they, could they, have remained under the ministry of one, who, in their judgment, taught a system, 'not only opposed to reason, and the sacred scriptures, but to all pure and true religion, to moral rectitude and piety'—a system 'entirely false, and dangerous, and pernicious in its tendency'!*" Whatever pretences may have been made, the object, from the first, has undoubtedly been to procure the dismission of Dr. Holmes; and at no period, it is confidently believed, would any thing short of this have satisfied the leaders of the opposition.

"But further: the head and front of Dr. Holmes' offending has been, that after long hesitation and indulgence, he at length felt himself constrained to decline exchanges with avowed Unitarian ministers; and the public will see, in the foregoing

* "If orthodox principles are of such 'dangerous and pernicious tendency,' so opposed 'to all pure and true religion, to moral rectitude and piety,' it is strange that the faithful preaching of them should produce so good effects. Witness the effects produced by the preaching of the fathers of New England. Witness the effects produced by the preaching of all the venerable ministers of Cambridge, since the Church was established." "Account," &c. p. 40.

To this note, we deem it proper to add, that it is admitted, if the preaching of those principles had produced "the good effects," ascribed to it, it would be very strange; as there is nothing in the distinguishing tenets of Calvinism, in any degree, adapted to the production of such effects. What those good effects were is not alleged; but there is an implied conclusion, that all the great and good effects, produced by preaching in New England and in Cambridge, have arisen from preaching those principles. Every zealous denomination of Christians, religionists, &c. has vainly imagined that its peculiar principles have been essential and all important, and the cause of all good effects in morality and religion; but history, in relation to past ages, demonstrates the folly of such an imagination, makes it a proper object of ridicule, if not of contempt, and teaches the world, that such peculiar principles have generally been not only human inventions, but great and pernicious errors, and that, instead of making mankind wiser and better, they have in every period, exerted a malignant influence, in exciting vanity, pride, ambition, jealousy, envy, anger, and other bad passions, and in clouding, binding, distorting and disabling the understanding, and thereby multiplying errors, contentions, hostilities, and many other most pernicious effects, inconsistent with the intellectual, moral, and religious improvement of the world. We must not confound the preaching of the peculiar tenets of Calvinism with the preaching of those great and infinitely valuable principles of moral and religious truth, which are common to most, if not to all, christian denominations. The author of the foregoing note is informed, that his great "implied conclusion" is not admitted to be conformable to historical truth; but is a cunning specimen of eulogy by an individual on his own theological denomination. "All the venerable ministers of Cambridge" have not been Calvinists, and that fact is well known, and some of those, who were denominated Calvinists, were too charitable, pious, and wise, to devote any considerable proportion of their time to preaching the peculiar tenets of that denomination, which have been disputed, disbelieved, and condemned by vast numbers of persons, and by many of the wisest and best members of society, ever since their introduction.

complaint, the hollowness and insufficiency of such a ground of offence. What are the views entertained by Unitarians respecting the Calvinistic or orthodox faith? They regard it as '*not only opposed to reason and the sacred scriptures, but to all pure and true religion, to moral rectitude, and piety*'—'*a harsh, unreasonable, unscriptural creed*'—as '*entirely false, and dangerous and pernicious in its tendency*.' And do they really wish to exchange with men who hold and teach such a system of religion? Do they wish to put men into their pulpits to inculcate such a faith—to teach such doctrines? This complaint on the subject of exchange is certainly a most ridiculous one. The *Orthodox* regard Unitarians as having *departed from the essential doctrines of the gospel*, and it is on this account that they decline exchanges with them. They feel that they could not act with any appearance of consistency, as honest and faithful men, if they did otherwise. But while Unitarians regard the Orthodox as holding a system which is '*not only opposed to reason and the sacred scriptures, but to all pure and true religion, to moral rectitude and piety*'—'*a system entirely false, and dangerous and pernicious in its tendency*', they are most inconsistently urging an exchange of pulpits, and are harassing, censuring, and dismissing venerable and faithful men, because they cannot in conscience yield to their wishes!"

There are NO MISREPRESENTATIONS in the complaint. ALL THE CHARGES in it, except one, were SUBSTANTIALLY PROVED before the Council. "*That nothing from the first would have satisfied the leading opposers of Dr. Holmes, except his removal,*" is an assertion, which *has been repeated too often, not only without, but against the evidence* in the case. Previously to Dr. Holmes' adoption of the exclusive system, the *prevailing character* of his preaching was *practical*, and he was wise enough not to occupy the attention and waste the time of his parishioners with sermons, on the *distinguishing tenets of Calvinism*, and the *doctrine of the Trinity*, and often introduced liberal preachers into our pulpit. Had Dr. Holmes continued to preach and exchange, as he did more than thirty years, no complaint would have been publicly made, and the peace of the Parish would have been preserved. If Dr. Holmes has not altered very important and essential parts of his christian principles and feelings, why was he, "*after long hesitation and indulgence, constrained to decline exchanges with avowed Unitarian ministers?*" What but a *change in his mind on religious subjects destroyed that "hesitation,"* and put an end to that "*indulgence?*" What is the difference between "*an avowed Unitarian minister,*" and one, whom Dr. Holmes and other persons generally believed, or even knew, to be Unitarians? The opinions expressed in some of the foregoing papers concerning Calvinism, relate to *its distinguishing tenets*: but not to those principles in which they harmonize with other denominations of Christians. "*And do they really wish to exchange with men, who hold and teach such a system of religion?*" "*Do they wish to put men into their pulpits to inculcate such a faith,—to teach such doctrines?*" Unitarians do not arrogate to themselves all religion, and deny the christian character to other denominations, and refuse christian fellowship to them, and, for the purpose of preventing their being heard, exclude them from their pulpits. Liberal preachers are friends to liberty of conscience, and to a charitable, pastoral intercourse, among ministers of different denominations, and they condemn all intolerance and bigotry. They *do not wish* their parishioners to hear the *peculiar tenets* of Calvinism, nor believe, that the preaching of them ever has been, or can be, useful, or in any degree adapted to promote the cause of true religion; but, if Calvinists think it their duty to preach those tenets, they do not consider it consistent with

christian charity to exclude them from their pulpits on that account. In this parish the majority, through the whole of this controversy, have manifested a willingness, that the minority should hear Calvinism, a reasonable proportion of the time, if they prefer it, not because the majority believe *its peculiarities* to be true or useful, but because they are bound to allow the same liberty of conscience to others, which they claim for themselves. Liberal preachers do not wish to exchange with *Calvinists, as such*; but are willing to maintain a pastoral intercourse with them, *as Christians*. "The orthodox regard Unitarians as having *departed from the essential doctrines of the gospel*;" if they do, it should be understood, that such an opinion is not sufficient evidence to prove that *those supposed "essential doctrines"* are not *radical errors* in the minds of those, who believe them. But the above cited specimen of oratory *artfully evades the important question* in this controversy, which is not, whether Unitarians wish to exchange with Calvinists; nor whether it is expedient, that they should exchange; but whether *Dr. Holmes and a small number of the Parish* SHALL COMPEL the majority to hear Calvinism only, against their principles, and deprive them of hearing what they believe to be religious truth, and what they were formerly accustomed to hear, unless they leave the Parish? The majority in this Parish are not urging an exchange with Calvinists, nor invitations by Dr. Holmes to them to come into this Parish and preach here, against the religious principles of the majority and votes of the Parish; but are ardently desirous of seeing the termination of such exchanges and invitations in this Parish, and having an opportunity to hear constantly that preaching, which they consider both true and useful, instead of being false and hurtful. But all the proceedings of the majority in this controversy demonstrate, that they condemn and reject the *system of exclusion*, which Calvinists have introduced, and are making great efforts to support and enforce, contrary to their former practice, and to the prevalent, charitable, religious principles and feelings of an enlightened age, but in harmony with the bigotry and intemperate zeal of the dark ages, when papal infallibility was made the standard for religious truth, and superstition governed the ecclesiastical world. May those, who magnify christian *humility, in words*, never succeed in establishing their claim to infallibility, or in supporting an uncharitable system of exclusion.

Pursuant to the letters missive before mentioned, the gentlemen mentioned in the following Result of Council assembled at the time and place appointed in said letters.

The Rev. Dr. Nichols, who, with a delegate from his Church had been invited to attend, not being present, and there being no delegate from his Church, or the Church under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Parker, attending, the Committee of the Parish requested the gentlemen present, pursuant to said letters missive, to proceed, as an Ecclesiastical Council in the business on which they had been called to act.

The council having been organized by the election of a Moderator, a Scribe, and an Assistant Scribe, the following communication from Dr. Holmes, addressed to the Moderator, was read.

To the Rev. Ezra Ripley, D. D.—To be communicated to the Ministers and Delegates assembled by invitation of a Committee of the First Parish in Cambridge, to inquire into and decide upon complaints intended to be alleged against me.

I have received notice of your being called to sit this day as an *ex parte* council, to hear certain complaints which, it is understood, are to be preferred against me by a Committee of the Parish of which I am minister. Having been always willing, and having uniformly expressed my willingness, and being still willing, to concur in the calling of a Mutual Council, in such manner as has been generally practised among the Congregational Churches and Parishes in New England, I feel myself in duty bound to deny the jurisdiction of an *ex parte* Council; and I do therefore protest against the power and authority of this Council to take any cognizance of any complaint which may be made against me by any Committee or other persons of my Parish, and against all and every proceeding which may be adopted, or proposed to be adopted, on the subject of any such complaint.

ABIEL HOLMES,

Pastor of the First Church and Society in Cambridge.

Cambridge, 19 May, 1829.

The following Protest by a Committee of the First Church of Christ in Cambridge, “against any proceedings which said Council may have in relation to the subjects submitted to their consideration and decision,” was read.

To the Ecclesiastical Council to be holden in the First Parish in Cambridge, on Tuesday, the nineteenth day of May inst., to hear and determine upon the alleged causes of complaint against the Rev. Dr. Holmes, preferred by the inhabitants of said Parish, by their Committee, appointed for this purpose.

The undersigned, members of the First Church of Christ in Cambridge, and a Committee, appointed for the purpose of representing the interests of said Church, before any Council, to be convened within said Parish, do hereby, in behalf of said Church, enter our solemn *Protest* against any proceedings, which said Council may have in relation to the subjects submitted to their consideration and decision, and for the following reasons:—

First, Because the Church, by their vote passed on the twenty-first day of December, A. D. 1828, unanimously voted to unite with the Parish and Pastor, in calling a *Mutual Ecclesiastical Council*, for the purpose of adjusting the difficulties existing between Rev. Dr. Holmes, and the members of said Parish.

Second, Because we believe the members of said Parish have adopted an unprecedented course in rejecting the concurrent voice of the Church, in calling a Council, deeply interested as they are, in the subjects submitted to such Council.

Third, Because, while we disclaim all right to interfere with the Parish in any civil contract, providing for the support of a “teacher of piety, morality, and religion,” according to our constitution and laws, we are not willing quietly to surrender the rights of the Church, in the question of deposing a minister and pastor, who has faithfully, and, as we believe, conscientiously discharged the duties of his office for nearly forty years, with an almost universal acceptance.

Fourth, Because, that in almost, if not all the questions, that have been decided by our courts of law, involving ecclesiastical principles, although it has not been adjudged essential that the Church and Society should unite in the call and settlement of a minister, and no controlling power is given to the Church, yet the principle of co-operation has uniformly been recognised, and strongly recommended.

Fifth, Because we believe, that there has been no provision of law, or decision of any court, that goes to exclude the Church from all consideration and interest, in questions so nearly affecting their rights, as those which this Council are called to consider; and especially where there has been a desire, distinctly expressed by the Church, to co-operate with the Parish, in the measure which they themselves have proposed.

Sixth, Because we believe, that from an unbiased and candid consideration of the present case, it will be found, that many of the proposals submitted to Dr. Holmes by the Parish, have been unreasonable in themselves, and such as in the

exercise of an independent private judgment, he had an undisputed right to reject; and that the Parish have unreasonably withheld their co-operation with the Church, so strongly recommended by our courts, and thereby prevented the call of a *Mutual Council*, whose decision would probably have been satisfactory to all parties concerned.

Seventh, Because we are not prepared, as yet, to submit to the opinion, that there are no rights pertaining to the Church of Christ, in distinction from those which belong to us as citizens, and especially in questions involving the rights of conscience, and a sacred regard to those institutions, on the preservation of which our religious liberty so essentially depends.

Eighth, Because the funds belonging to the First Church in Cambridge, the income of which is, in part, appropriated to the support of the ministry, and the relief of poor widows belonging to the Church, has been accumulated from the voluntary contribution of its own members, at the communion; and in the Act, incorporating the *Ministerial Fund*, separate from that of the Church, the Church is recognised as a party interested in the appropriation of its income.

Ninth, Because, as a Church of Christ, we feel much aggrieved at the proceedings of the Parish, in refusing to acknowledge our rights and interests, in the all-important subject, now submitted to your consideration and decision.

For the foregoing reasons, we the undersigned, in behalf of said Church, respectfully request the Council now convened, to stay all proceedings in relation to the subjects of complaint, preferred by the Parish against Rev. Dr. Holmes, but such as will recommend a *Mutual Council*, according to ecclesiastical usage, from whose decision the Church claim no appeal.

WILLIAM HILLIARD, JAMES MUNROE, RICHARD H. DANA, JONATHAN C. PRENTISS, SAMUEL F. SAWYER,	} Committee of the } First Church } in Cambridge.
--	---

Cambridge, First Parish, May 14, 1829.

The following communication, signed by Willian Hilliard and 27 others of the parishioners, which number included a majority of the Church, protesting against the Council's "proceeding to consider the subject before them," was also presented and read.

To the Ecclesiastical Council, convened and holden in the First Parish in Cambridge, on Tuesday, the nineteenth day of May, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine, by Letters Missive from a Committee of said Parish, and in virtue of an authority supposed to have been given to said Committee by said Parish, by their Vote of the twenty-second day of December, 1828, "to call an ex parte Council, to advise in relation to all difficulties and matters in controversy, existing between the Rev. Dr. Holmes and said Parish, before such Council, and to adopt and pursue all suitable and legal measures in relation to a settlement of said difficulties, or a dissolution of the connexion existing between the said Holmes and the said Parish."

We, the undersigned, members of, and legal voters in the said First Parish of Cambridge, feeling deeply interested, and much aggrieved by the proceedings of said Parish in relation to the subject upon which you are called to act, do hereby respectfully and solemnly enter our *Protest* against the Ecclesiastical Council, thus convened, proceeding to consider the subject before them;—and for the following reasons, *viz.*:

First, Because the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the present incumbent, was settled in the First Parish in Cambridge, by the united and concurrent voice of the Church and Society in said Parish, without any conditions, limitation, or restrictions, affixed to his settlement.

Second, Because, that in all the propositions, which have been made to the Parish, at their several meetings, and which have by them been adopted, no allegations have been made against the Rev. Dr. Holmes, for immoral conduct, a neglect of his ministerial or parochial duties, or a change of doctrine, the only three grounds, as we humbly conceive, upon which an Ecclesiastical Council can proceed to dissolve the connexion subsisting between a minister and his people, except by the mutual consent of all parties interested.

Third, Because the several proposals, submitted by the Parish to the Rev. Dr. Holmes, for his adoption, prior to that of calling an Ecclesiastical Council, were of such a nature as gave him the right of *rejecting* or *accepting*, in perfect accordance with the tenure by which he holds his office, and by an independent exercise of the right of private judgment.

Fourth, Because we believe, that no individual, or body of men whatever, civil or ecclesiastical, have a right, under our government, to pass any law, order, rule, or edict, that will serve to impair or destroy the obligation of contracts, without a violation of one of the most important provisions of the constitution.

Fifth, Because, that in the Act incorporating the Trustees of the Ministerial Fund of the First Parish in Cambridge, it is provided, "that the annual income of said Fund shall be appropriated to the support of such Congregational minister or ministers, as shall be regularly ordained and settled in said Parish, by the joint concurrence of the Inhabitants and Church thereof."

Sixth, Because the right of the Committee of the Parish, by virtue of the vote of said Parish, passed on the twenty-second day of December last, to call an *ex parte* Council, for the purposes expressed in said vote, does not exist; Rev. Dr. Holmes never having refused, neglected, or delayed to unite in calling a Mutual Council, according to ecclesiastical usage.

Seventh, Because the Parish, by their vote, passed on the twenty-second day of December last, refused to receive the memorial of the Church, almost unanimously adopted, as also the minority of the Parish, the purport of which was, that the Church, as such, should unite with the Parish and the Pastor, in the call of a Mutual Council, according to ancient and immemorial usage.

Eighth, Because, as we humbly conceive, all the parties, originally concerned in the call and settlement of a minister, are justly entitled by usage, courtesy, equity, and law, to a hearing before any tribunal competent to the adoption of measures tending to dissolve the connexion existing between such minister and his people.

Ninth, Because we seriously apprehend, that a severance of the ties, which have so long and so happily subsisted between a faithful pastor and his flock, upon the grounds which in the present case have been alleged, will tend essentially to undermine and destroy the foundations upon which our religious institutions have, for centuries, rested in security.

For the foregoing reasons, the undersigned respectfully request the Council, now convened, to stay all proceedings in relation to the complaints which have been submitted to their consideration, as may tend to dissolve the connexion existing between Rev. Dr. Holmes and the First Church and Society in Cambridge,—and that whatever their decision may be, tending to a dissolution of this connexion, they will permit this our solemn protest to be entered upon the records of their proceedings. And, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Cambridge, First Parish, May 18, 1829.

A Committee was appointed to wait on Dr Holmes, and inform him that the Council were in session, and would receive any further information which he or his friends might think proper to introduce; which Committee reported that Dr. Holmes had no futher communication to make.

The Complaint made by the Committee, in behalf of the Parish, against Dr. Holmes, having been read, said Committee in support of the several allegations and charges in said Complaint, introduced several witnesses, who testified, that the Rev. Mr. Hilliard, the immediate predecessor of Dr. Holmes, was considered as entertaining liberal theological sentiments; that he attended and assisted at an ordination of a gentleman who "was an Arminian, well known as such;" that he afterwards preached for said gentleman; conversed freely with him on religious subjects, and expressed "his full dissent from the doctrines of Calvinism;" that in the conversation above

referred to, witness did not hear him "speak definitely about the Trinity; that topic was not then agitated," and that witness "presumed he was an Unitarian."

It was stated by another witness, that "at the ordination of the late Dr. Mayhew, two churches only were present, Dr. Appleton's and Mr. Gay's of Hingham: it was supposed the reason of the absence of other churches was, that Dr. Mayhew was liberal;" that "at the ordination of Dr. Howard, of Boston, Dr. Appleton gave the right-hand of fellowship;" that witness had always supposed Dr. Mayhew and Dr. Howard were more liberal than other clergymen of their day; that Dr. Howard was not a member of the Boston Association, owing, as was supposed, to his being more liberal than other clergymen; that the subject of the *Trinity* was not then agitated, but Dr. Mayhew and Dr. Howard were both anti-Calvinistic, and that witness had reason to believe Dr. Mayhew was not a Trinitarian.

A gentleman who had been a member of Dr. Holmes' church for nineteen years, testified, that until within four or five years Dr. Holmes exchanged freely with most of the liberal clergymen in his vicinity, with the Rev. Mr. Gannett of Cambridge very frequently;—that witness always understood that the majority of the church were liberal, until within three or four years last past; that he had reason so to suppose from the fact, that they several times voted to send delegates to Unitarian ordinations, against the wishes of Dr. Holmes, particularly in the cases of Rev. Messrs. Gannett and Pierpont of Boston, in both which cases the church voted to send, and did send, but Dr. Holmes did not attend; that the church have *lately* refused to join in such ordinations; that the whole number of male members was nineteen, of which one third were liberal; that there were no objections on the part of the church to liberal exchanges until within three years last past; that the congregation was larger when Unitarian clergymen preached, especially in the afternoon, than when Calvinists officiated; that the congregation within the last two or three years, and more especially within the last year, has diminished; that for 20 years past, witness had considered the Parish as liberal in their religious opinions; that sometime after Dr. Holmes commenced his exclusive system there were, at one time, seven individuals admitted to church membership; that he then thought, and always should think, that this was the result of a concerted plan for the purpose of making a show; and that there had been no accessions to the church within the last year.

It was stated by another aged witness, that he was acquainted with Mr. Hilliard, Dr. Holmes' predecessor; that he did not consider him a Calvinist; and was clear, that he was not a Trinitarian; that he was popular, beloved, and respected; that when Dr. Holmes came here, witness "considered him, for a Connecticut man, liberal; that his liberality did not increase with his years; that when the Rev. William Ware came here from New York, Dr. Holmes importuned him to preach, and on being told by Mr. Ware that he had no sermon with him, Dr. Holmes replied, that he must make one,—that he *must* preach; that on another occasion Mr. Ware, on a visit at Cambridge, called on Dr. Holmes, who held a long con-

versation with him, and closed it with giving him *a lecture* on ministerial intercourse, and said, “*it was time to draw a line among the clergymen;*” that as Mr. Ware was leaving Dr. Holmes, he said, “You must preach for me next Sabbath, half a day;” to which Mr. Ware assented at the time, but afterwards declined accepting the invitation. This was at the time Dr. Holmes changed his ground, the time of the General Convention, when letters had been sent to the orthodox clergy to be prompt and punctual in their attendance; that Dr. Holmes had not afterwards exchanged, as witness recollects, with liberal clergymen; that “since that time *he seems to have enlisted under a new banner;*” “has been more Calvinistic in his preaching, especially in vacation, when the officers of the college were present;” that witness wrote to Dr. Holmes two or three times in a friendly manner, on the subject of the course he had taken, and advised him to withdraw from his Parish, but that Dr. Holmes had returned no answer to the letters referred to.

Another witness, who had lived in Cambridge 25 years, and had had a family 20 years, testified, that Dr. Holmes’ pastoral visits to his family did not average more than one a year; that they were generally at the latter part of the day, and 15 or 20 minutes in duration; that “he sometimes introduced religious and moral subjects, sometimes gave affectionate advice, and occasionally such as we did not approve;” that several persons had absented themselves from meeting on account of Dr. Holmes’ exchanges, and manner of preaching; that others have threatened to go off; that the congregation is diminishing; * that the preaching of Dr. Holmes, since he discontinued liberal exchanges, had been more frequently doctrinal, and that for these reasons, witness and others had occasionally gone to other meetings; that witness recollects a conversation at his house between Dr. Holmes and himself, in which Dr. Holmes mentioned lectures by Universalists in his neighbourhood, advised him and his family by no means to attend them, and said, that they were dangerous, and that he would not himself, and would not have a friend of his, adopt those sentiments for all the world.

Another witness stated, that about two years ago he left Dr. Holmes’ meeting on account of his exchanges, and attended elsewhere; that on communion days, he attended in the morning at Dr. Holmes’ meeting, being then and still a member of his church; that others had absented themselves on the same account, declaring that they were willing to return, if Dr. Holmes would return to his former course of practice; that a large proportion of the voters in Dr. Holmes’ Parish, certainly three to one, were liberal.

Another witness testified, that he commenced worshipping with Dr. Holmes in 1794, and joined his church in 1799; that he always considered his Parish as liberal, and he so considered his church

* How the *evidence*, here given, in relation to the decrease of Dr. Holmes’ congregation, will justify the declaration of Dr. Holmes on pages 54, 55, “that, so far from finding causes of discouragement in my ministry during three or four of the last years, I have found very much to encourage me. The public services of the Sabbath, it has appeared to me, have been attended by *greater numbers*, and with more solemnity,” we are at a loss to imagine.

until within three or four years last past ; that he never supposed a single member of his Parish dissatisfied with liberal exchanges until within a few years ; that until within a few years he had never known Dr. Holmes preach upon the Trinity, as a controverted doctrine ; but within that time, he has preached on it ; and in answer to a question, whether the preaching of Dr. Holmes within the last three or four years had become uncharitable and denunciatory, he replied in the affirmative.

A witness testified, that he " attended two lectures here by Dr. Beecher ; the subject of the first was, "*A change of heart;*" of the second, "*Regeneration;*" at the close of these lectures, Dr. Beecher made an exhortation to the friends of Dr. Holmes ; said the existing controversy was no less than this, " whether the doctrines of our fore-fathers should be embraced, or whether a MORAL DESOLATION should sweep over the land," and that Dr. Holmes was present on these occasions.

Another witness testified, that " he removed to this place about four years ago ; that he first joined Dr. Holmes' society, but left his meeting-house on account of his *denunciatory* preaching, and his ministerial exchanges ; that he should have continued his attendance at Dr. Holmes' meeting, had Dr. Holmes continued to preach and exchange as he formerly did ; that witness recollects, that on one occasion Dr. Holmes called the majority of his Parish "*connivers,*" and from that time he withdrew from his meetings ; that the general strain of Dr. Holmes' preaching reflected severely, as witness thought, on his Parish.

Another gentleman, a clergyman, testified, that he once considered Dr. Holmes among his best friends ; that he was in habits of intimacy with Dr. Holmes before his settlement ; that Dr. Holmes well knew the religious sentiments of witness at the time of, and long previously to, his ordination,—that Dr. Holmes well knew witness to be an Unitarian ; that he used frequently to exchange with Dr. Holmes ; that the last time of exchanging between Dr. Holmes and witness was June 11, 1826 ; that in 1815 they exchanged five times, and they used, generally, to exchange four or five times a year ; that Dr. Holmes often requested witness to preach his preparatory lectures ; which request, though a compliance was sometimes attended with inconvenience, witness seldom felt at liberty to decline, in consideration of the great friendship subsisting between them ; that, in a conversation between Dr. Holmes and witness, on the Saturday next preceding the sitting of the Council, witness remarked to him, that nothing had grieved witness so much as Dr. Holmes' change of conduct towards him, and that witness regretted Dr. Holmes had laid aside his christian spirit ; that Dr. Holmes said, "*the time had come to draw a line among Congregational ministers;*" that, about a year since, witness proposed an exchange with Dr. Holmes, which he declined, by saying he was engaged.

An aged member of the Parish, being absent from Cambridge at the sitting of the Council, having been requested to communicate to the Council such information as he possessed, relative to the subjects of inquiry, in a written statement, which was read to the Coun-

cil, testified, that he had ever lived in this Parish, and well remembered the state of it for 50 years past; that he recollects Dr. Appleton, and always considered him a liberal minded and useful minister; that he exchanged freely and frequently with the congregational clergymen in this vicinity, and was much and universally beloved by his people; that his successor, Rev. Mr. Hilliard, was very much respected by the people of his charge; that he exchanged very freely and generally with the Congregational ministers in the vicinity; that he always considered him a minister of liberal principles; that witness had been a member of Dr. Holmes' society ever since his settlement; that for thirty years or more after his settlement, Dr. Holmes exchanged very frequently with the ministers of Boston and its vicinity; that within three or four years past, Dr. Holmes had, unhappily for the peace and harmony of the Parish, discontinued his exchanges with clergymen denominated liberal, or Unitarian, with whom he had been accustomed to exchange, and had confined his exchanges to clergymen denominated Calvinistic, or orthodox; that the majority of Dr. Holmes' Parish are decidedly liberal, and opposed to the modern exclusive system, which he has adopted; that they have been of this character ever since the question of the Trinity has been a subject of controversy, have always been gratified by his exchanges with liberal clergymen, and much regret his refusal still to exchange with them. Among those with whom Dr. Holmes used to exchange, were, Dr. Lowell, Dr. Channing, Dr. Porter, Dr. Gray, Dr. Harris, Dr. Ware, Dr. Kirkland, Mr. Thatcher, Mr. Buckminster, and Mr. Gannett of Cambridge, and many and most of the Congregational clergy in Dr. Holmes' neighbourhood.

At the time of the settlement of Dr. Holmes, there were many of the Parish who were desirous of settling Mr. Alden Bradford. That he is confident that the usefulness of Dr. Holmes as minister of the Parish is very much diminished by the course he has recently adopted, and that the Parish would never be satisfied with him as their minister, unless he returned to his former and long-continued practice of liberal exchanges; that, although he had heard complaints of Dr. Holmes' neglect of pastoral visits, no serious difficulty had arisen between minister and people, and they generally esteemed and respected him until his change of ministerial practice, which alienated their affections from him; that he believed the present difficulties had arisen "solely from Dr. Holmes' change of practice, if not of sentiment, and not from any change of sentiment in religious theory and faith in the majority of his flock."

In addition to the testimony above stated, the following written depositions or statements were read to the Council.

To the Ecclesiastical Council, to be held on the nineteenth of May, to advise in relation to difficulties existing between the people of the First Parish in Cambridge, and their Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Holmes.

GENTLEMEN,

At the request of the Committee of said Parish, I testify, that on the twenty-sixth of November, 1826, I preached by exchange in the pulpit of the Rev. Dr. Holmes, who preached for me at Medford.

At the request of the same Committee also, I testify, that, in the

summer of 1827, I heard one of the evening lectures of the Rev. Edward Beecher, of Boston, on the Evidences of Christianity, delivered at the old court-house, in Cambridge; in which lecture, according to my best recollection, the said Mr. Beecher maintained the following proposition, namely,—That, in proportion as a doctrine, purporting to come from God, is opposed by man, in that proportion is its truth confirmed, because man is by nature opposed to the truth. This principle he illustrated by referring the unbelief of the Jews in the Messiah, and, in general, all unbelief in the doctrines of Christianity, to a native depravity of the heart. In order that I might be sure that I was not mistaken, in regard to the principle laid down by Mr. Beecher, I, on that evening, or on the following evening, stated it in nearly the same words to one or two persons who heard the lecture, and found that they agreed with me in their understanding of the proposition maintained in it.

Yours, respectfully,

— 12 May, 1829. ——————

A reverend Doctor of Divinity in the Commonwealth made the following written statement.

—————, May 1, 1829.

To the Council proposed to be held at Cambridge, on the nineteenth of the present month, on account of the Controversies between the Inhabitants of the First Parish in Cambridge and the Rev. Dr. Holmes, their Pastor.

The subscriber, being requested to state what evidence he possesses in relation to the religious opinions of the late Rev. Mr. Hilliard, is ready to testify, that after the installation of the Rev. Mr. Hilliard, Oct. 1783, being at that time a student in the University, he constantly attended public worship with the society under Mr. Hilliard's pastoral care. After receiving his first degree, at the commencement of 1786, he resided nearly two years in the family of the late Chief Justice Dana, and continued to attend public worship with the First Parish in Cambridge. He united himself with the church in that place. He occasionally visited Mr. Hilliard, and was happy to hear his rational conversation upon religious subjects. In his discourses, in his devotional exercises, in his more private and familiar advice to the young gentlemen who called upon him, the subscriber is ready to declare, with the most perfect sincerity, that he never heard him utter a sentiment which liberal christians and those who are now denominaded Unitarians, would disapprove.

That Mr. Hilliard was decidedly opposed to the distinguishing tenets of Calvinism, is a fact so well known to the subscriber, and to so many others still living, that it cannot be called in question. With respect to the doctrine of the Trinity, the subscriber is firmly persuaded, from repeated conversations with him, that it constituted no part of his creed. His opinion upon this subject agreed more nearly with that of the late excellent Dr. Price, than any other author whom I have ever met with.

The sermons preached at the ordination of Dr. Ware, at the ordination of the subscriber, if perused with care, will tend to confirm the

correctness of the statement which is here given with regard to the theological tenets of the late Rev. Mr. Hilliard.

I am, gentlemen, with every sentiment of esteem and respect, your sincere friend.

The following Sermons and Eulogy were introduced in evidence before the Council to prove the Rev. Timothy Hilliard's theological character, and to prove that he was anti-Calvinistic &c., and one of the most liberal ministers of his age, in his pastoral intercourse &c., *to wit* :—

Sermon by Rev. Timothy Hilliard, delivered December 10th, 1788, at the Ordination of the Rev. John Andrews, D. D., Newburyport.

Sermon by Rev. Timothy Hilliard, delivered October 24th, 1787, at the Ordination of the Rev. Henry Ware, now D. D., in Hingham.

Sermon by Rev. Timothy Hilliard, at the Ordination of the Rev. Bezaleel Howard, in Springfield, April 27th, 1785.

President Willard's Eulogy on said Hilliard, who died May, 1790.

Divers parts of the following printed sermons, by the Rev. Dr. Holmes, were read in evidence to the Council, *to wit* :—

His Sermon before the Convention of Congregational Ministers, May 27th, 1819, to prove Dr. Holmes' opinions at that time, concerning the character which a pastor ought to exhibit, especially to those not belonging to his own sect, and concerning the rights of churches. See from p. 25, the section beginning on that page.—See from p. 32 to p. 34 relative to the rights of the churches.

The Sermon preached at the Ordination of the Rev. Thomas B. Gannett, at Cambridge-Port, January 19th, 1814, to prove Dr. Holmes' friendship to Mr. Gannett at that time, his high opinion of him as a man, a Christian, and a minister, and his eloquent commendation of him, although a Unitarian.

Two Sermons, preached January 25th, 1829, the thirty-seventh anniversary of Dr. Holme's installation. The introductory note by the author, relating to this controversy.

The Committee of the Parish having offered to the Council the evidence above mentioned, the Hon. Samuel Hoar, jun. of Concord, made the concluding argument for the Parish.

At the time of Mr. Hoar's argument, Dr. Holmes having denied the jurisdiction of the Council, it was not known, or suspected, that any argument, other than the arguments contained in his numerous papers to the memorialists and the Parish, was made by him, or for him; but from the "Account" &c. by "the church," it appears that Dr. Holmes, on the first day of the session of the Council, secretly addressed to an old friend, a member of that Council, a letter, containing his argument of the case, of which letter the following is a copy, as the same is published in said "Account," &c. p. 43.

To the Rev. —————, D. D.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I have been informed that you are a member of an *ex parte* Council, assembled here to-day to hear certain complaints which are to be preferred against me by a Committee of my Parish. You will perceive by my protest, that I wholly decline the jurisdiction of this *ex parte* Council.

In a formal paper, like a protest, it did not seem necessary that I should do more than object generally to all its proceedings, and deny, in terms, its author-

ity. I am entirely willing, however, my dear Sir, to present to you, as a friend of long standing, a brief state of the facts of the case, which have governed my conduct.

I think the Council has no jurisdiction, because it is *ex parte*, and because no cause exists for summoning an *ex parte* Council.

I. Because in the proceedings of the Parish, which have issued in your being asked to sit as an *ex parte* Council, the Church in this Parish have neither been invited, nor permitted, to have any part, although from the first proposal of a Council, and uniformly since, they have expressed their desire, both to the Parish and to the pastor, to unite in calling a Mutual Council, and claimed merely a concurrent voice, on the ground of equity and ecclesiastical usage; and other parishioners have, in like manner, expressed, in a Memorial to the Parish, the same desire of the concurrent voice of the Church. Such concurrence is believed to be requisite from ecclesiastical usage, and from the mode of my settlement in this Parish.

1. *From ecclesiastical usage.* The Congregational churches, from the beginning, have been accustomed to have a distinct voice in all proceedings relating to the settlement and dismission of ministers, or the preferring of complaints against them; and in cases affecting their rights and privileges.

2. *From the mode of my settlement.* I was called to the pastoral and ministerial office in this church and congregation by the distinct and concurrent votes of the Church and of the Parish. The Church was a party to the contract which has so long subsisted between myself and this people. The Church, therefore, as well as the Parish, ought, I apprehend, to be a party to any measures tending to the dissolution of that relation, and to have the opportunity, at least, of giving, by a distinct voice, their concurrence in those measures.

II. Because a Mutual Ecclesiastical Council has not been declined on my part. The uniform ecclesiastical usage in this State renders the calling of an *ex parte* Council proper and valid, only when a regular Mutual Council has been declined. The Parish have, through their Committee, proposed to me a Mutual Council: But I have not declined a Mutual Council; on the contrary, I have distinctly and repeatedly declared my consent to such a Council, should it be regularly called, and my readiness to co-operate with the Committee in calling such a Council. That I have never declined such a Council, may be seen by my first answer of the 28th of January last to the Parish, and by all my subsequent communications on that subject. From these communications it may also be seen, that, while I have expressed to the Committee my desire that the Church might have a concurrent voice in calling the Council, I have never yet, in point of fact, refused a Mutual Council, to be chosen in the manner which the Parish have preferred. However I might have ultimately decided that question, I thought it my duty to state to the Committee of the Parish the manner in which I considered the Council should be chosen, and to request them to lay before the Parish my answer to their proposal, expressive of my wishes upon the subject, which they have declined to do; and while the claims of the Church were, as I supposed, in discussion before the Committee of the Parish, they broke off the discussion, and called an *ex parte* Council.—In these circumstances I have supposed that ministers would not consent to sit as upon an Ecclesiastical Council; but, however they may decide on that for themselves, it is clear, in my opinion, that their proceedings would not be valid.

Permit me to add: The introduction of an *ex parte* Council, in this case, would, I apprehend, be a departure from such usage as has become the common law of our churches, and would furnish a precedent, which, if followed and sanctioned, might violate, or impair, the obligation of the most solemn contracts, and deprive our churches of those invaluable rights, the enjoyment and maintenance of which were the primary object of our forefathers in forming the first settlement of New England.

Believing, my dear Sir, that you will receive this communication in the friendly spirit in which it is written,

I am yours truly, with respect and regard,

Cambridge, 19 May, 1829.

A. HOLMES.*

* ‘‘*O tempora! O mores! Heu pietas!*’’—It is almost impossible to believe, that the Rev. Dr. Holmes wrote and secretly sent the above letter; but it is stated in the “Account” &c. that he did. If so, in public view, he denied the jurisdiction of the

RESULT OF COUNCIL.

Cambridge, May 19, 1829.

In pursuance of letters missive from a Committee of the First Parish in Cambridge, an Ecclesiastical Council assembled in the Old Court House, "to hear and advise in relation to difficulties and matters in controversy, existing between said Parish and the Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D., their pastor, and continued in session by adjournments till May 21.

Concord,	<i>Ezra Ripley, D. D.</i>	Deacon <i>Reuben Brown, Jr.</i>
Roxbury,	<i>Eliphalet Porter, D. D.</i>	Deacon <i>William Davis.</i>
Worcester,	<i>Aaron Bancroft, D. D.</i>	Brother <i>Samuel M. Burnside.</i>
Lancaster,	<i>Nathaniel Thayer, D. D.</i>	Deacon <i>Joel Wilder.</i>
Salem,	<i>James Flint, D. D.</i>	Brother <i>Zechariah F. Silsbee.</i>
Portsmouth,	<i>Nathan Parker, D. D.</i>	

The Council organized by the appointment of

Ezra Ripley, D. D. Moderator.
Nathaniel Thayer, D. D. Scribe.
Brother Samuel M. Burnside, Assistant Scribe.

The Rev. Moderator led the Council in Prayer.

A communication, delivered to the Rev. Dr. Ripley, from the Rev. Dr. Holmes, denying the jurisdiction of this Council, was read, with certain papers designed by members of the Church and Parish as a remonstrance against the continued session and proceedings of this Council. Whereupon,

Council, elected by the Parish, on his neglect and refusal to join in the election of it, and refused to appear, as a party, before the Council; but, with extraordinary address, consummate art, and incomprehensible justice, secretly sent the above letter to an old and intimate friend, a member of that Council, containing an artful statement and argument of his case. The Parish had no knowledge of that letter before the publication of a copy of it by "the church" in said "Account," &c. Was Dr. Holmes a party before that Council, after having publicly denied its jurisdiction? He, by that letter, argued his case to it; and by his unusual dexterity, protected himself against an answer, as effectually, as if he had delivered it from the pulpit. The Committee of the Parish intended to be faithful to their constituents, and to manage the case before the Council, according to the best of their knowledge and ability, according to the rules of law and ancient and approved principles and usages, for the purpose of obtaining a just result; but they must acknowledge, that the publication of the copy of the above letter demonstrates, that they were deceived and led into a monstrous error, as they believed that they were conducting the trial of the case before an *ex parte Council*, without an opponent, when, in fact and in truth, Dr. Holmes by his said letter, was their antagonist, attempting to operate upon the minds of the Council, with his extraordinary art, power, and eloquence. It is a fundamental principle in the government of this Commonwealth, that "it is the right of every citizen to be tried by judges as free, IMPARTIAL, and independent, as the LOT OF HUMANITY WILL ADMIT." The eternal principles of justice require impartiality in all judicial tribunals, whether created by the law, or by the act of the parties, conformably to law; and, in respect to the qualification of impartiality, there can be no sound distinction between *Courts of Law, Referees, Ecclesiastical Councils, &c.* If persons should be permitted to send private letters to those who are acting in a judicial capacity, would not their minds be in great danger of being biassed, and their impartiality of being destroyed? What individual would not feel himself injured by such an act of the opposite party, or, in such a case, would be convinced, if a decision were made against him, that justice had been done him? If such a practice were to be tolerated, it would almost annihilate the numerous and inestimable advantages now derived from an impartial administration of justice. *It is not allowed. It cannot be tolerated. Religion, law, morality, reason, common sense, forbid it.* What would be the legal consequence, if a party to a suit should send such a letter to a Judge of a Court, or a juror, relating to the suit on trial there? Would it not be an offence against the public administration of justice, which would not escape due punishment?

Voted, That the Rev. Dr. Porter and Brother Zechariah F. Silsbee be a committee to wait upon and inform the Rev. Dr. Holmes, that this Council have received and read the communication made by him, by the committee of the Church, and by individuals of the Parish, and will be happy to receive from them, either by person, or in writing, any further information, which he or they shall think proper to introduce.

The committee reported, that they had waited upon the Rev. Dr. Holmes, were kindly received, and were told by him, that he had no further communication to make to this Council.

On the part of the committee of the Parish, their proceedings in relation to the Rev. Dr. Holmes were introduced, accompanied by various communications, which passed to and from said Committee and Rev. Dr. Holmes, bringing to view the conditions upon which he and a majority of the members of his Church would consent to the calling of a mutual Council. Whereupon,

Voted, unanimously, That Dr. Holmes has declined a compliance with the request of the Parish to call a mutual Council, except upon conditions with which the Parish could not comply, consistently with their rights.*

* “Consistently with what rights? With the right to choose half the members of the proposed Council? No; for this right was expressly admitted to them. With the right to be heard fairly, and fully, and in any manner they pleased, before the proposed Council? No; for this right never was disputed, and would not have been. What right of the Parish then would have been yielded, if they had assented to the proposal of Dr. Holmes and the Church? Obviously no right at all; unless it be contended that the Parish have a right to trample on the Church at pleasure.” *Account*, p. 45, note.

The foregoing note appears to be a fine specimen of interrogative logic and catechetical eloquence. Each of the questions included in it, will be answered separately, in a style of humble imitation of the author.

“Consistently with what rights?” With those sacred and inalienable rights, which the moral Governor of the universe and the final Judge of all, has given, *not merely to the members of the church militant, but equally to every member of the human race*, to every subject of his moral empire. Those rights, which *all religion*, natural and revealed, which every human government, founded on the eternal principles of rectitude and of rational liberty, give and secure to all persons, who are the subjects of moral rule, and require to be defended and preserved inviolately.

“With the right to choose half the members of the proposed Council?” No. But with the right of the Parish, by itself, without the Church, to choose the most wise, impartial, charitable, and pious persons to be members of an ex parte Ecclesiastical Council, unless Dr. Holmes, in a constitutional and legal manner, would join in the choice of a Mutual Council, without annexing to his consent to join, any illegal condition, to which the Parish could not conform without great danger to their most valuable rights and great inconvenience, delay, and expense to themselves, and to which they were not by law, or reason, or religion bound to submit; with the right to confine this controversy to the legal parties to the contract between the Parish and Dr. Holmes, to which contract the Church was not, and could not be, in law, a party; with the right to refuse the admission of the Church, as party, because the Church had no controversy with Dr. Holmes; with the right to reject the Church, as party, because the individuals, composing the majority of the Church, had, not only condemned and opposed all the principles and proceedings of the Parish in this controversy, but had encouraged Dr. Holmes to condemn and oppose them, and pledged themselves to Dr. Holmes to support him, in future, in his opposition to the Parish.

“With the right to be heard fairly and fully, and in any manner they pleased, before the proposed Council?” No. But with the right to have a Council, who would hear fairly and fully, and decide, not according to the creed of an exclusive denomination and independently of the evidence, but according to law and the evidence, and the principles of rectitude and of rational liberty.

“What right of the Parish would have been yielded, if they had assented to the proposal of Dr. Holmes and the Church?” Their constitutional right; their right to an adequate remedy against the innovation and usurpation of Dr. Holmes; their right to hear such preaching, as they believe to be true, in prefer-

Attended to a paper, purporting to be a complaint forwarded by a committee of the Parish to Dr. Holmes, and to the papers, forming a correspondence between him and his parishioners.

Attended also to the reading of extracts from several pamphlets, produced with a view to communicate to this Council the history of this Parish, and their former ministers, the Rev. Dr. Appleton and the Rev. Mr. Hilliard, to evince the spirit of Dr. Holmes, in past years, and the rules, by which he believed it indispensable, that a Christian minister should be guided, and to possess them of all facts, requisite to a competent knowledge and judgment of the case submitted to them.

A number of witnesses were introduced, who testified to the following points, *viz.* :—that for about three years past, the intercourse of the Rev. Dr. Holmes, with his brethren in the ministry, had been of an exclusive character; that candidates and ministers, who were previously introduced into his pulpit, had been excluded by him; that the preaching of the Rev. Dr. Holmes had become uncharitable and denunciatory; * that these several causes had alienated the affec-

ence to being confined by Dr. Holmes and a small number of the parishioners, members of his Church, to that which they disbelieve and can not omit to condemn; their right as a majority, a large majority, of the parishioners, to decide parochial questions, according to the principles of a free government, and of equal rights of suffrage, without being governed, controlled, injured, or molested, or having their dearest and immensely valuable rights violated, or impaired, by the unconstitutional interference of a minority, composing a very small fraction of the Parish, and claiming a right of double suffrage; a right to recover and secure their natural, civil, and religious rights and privileges, without being opposed, obstructed, perplexed, or delayed, by those, who had no legal right to be a party, who before had denied and opposed, with great zeal, boldness, ingenuity and perseverance, all the principles professed, rights claimed, and measures proposed by the Parish, and encouraged and assisted Dr. Holmes in denying and opposing them, and determined, in future, to make all possible opposition to the principles, claims, and proceedings of the Parish; a right to avoid a company, with whom they have not been able to harmonize; a right to exclude those from this controversy, who exclude the Parish from religion, or deny to them the Christian name and character.

* “The witness who testified, ‘that the preaching of Dr. Holmes had become uncharitable and denunciatory,’ is a gentleman who was dismissed from the First Church in Cambridge to join the Church in Harvard College, in 1814. He has stated to Dr. Holmes, since the Council, that *he did not use the word ‘denunciatory,’ and should not use it.* But on more recent and particular inquiry by another person, he has admitted, that when asked by a member of the Council whether the preaching of Dr. Holmes had not become uncharitable and denunciation, he said that *it had*, although he did not himself use the word ‘denunciatory:’ a distinction about words, of which no man not well versed in the *learned languages* would have thought of availing himself! Dr. Holmes denies the charge here made, and appeals to his manuscripts, which may be examined to ascertain whether there can be found in them all a sentence of denunciation against those of other denominations.—The same gentleman stated before the Council, that he had taken the liberty to speak to Dr. Holmes, on the subject of his offensive preaching, by way of *caution*. When this caution was given, the gentleman did not state; and as Dr. Holmes has no recollection of it, the reader as well as ourselves, must be content to remain in ignorance.

“Another prominent witness, a member of the Church, stated that ‘the preaching of Dr. Holmes had become so offensive, that he was induced to worship in other places one half the time;’ and in regard to the alleged state of seriousness in the society for some time past, and the admissions to the Church ‘*that he believed then, and always should believe, that these accessions, and especially when seven were admitted at one time, were the result of a concerted plan for the purpose of making a show.*’ This attack upon the character of the pastor, the deacons, a majority of the male members of the Church, and upon the seven individuals admitted to the Church, is but one amongst the many instances of the melancholy effects of long-indulged and overwrought feeling. It is hoped, for the sake of the unhappy author of it, that he will be as quick to repent, as those attacked are ready to forgive him.” *Account*, pp. 45, 46, note.

tions of a majority of the Parish and tended to the injury and dissolution of the Society. The Hon. Samuel Hoar, in behalf of the Parish, then presented before the Council, in all its various relations and bearings, the controversy between

It is alleged in the foregoing note, that Dr. Holmes *denies the charge*, that his preaching "had become uncharitable and denunciatory," and appeals to his manuscripts, and that they "may be examined to ascertain, whether there can be found *in them all* a sentence of denunciation against *those of other denominations*." How much those manuscripts contain of Dr. Homes' preaching, we do not know, and how much of what he delivered from his pulpit was *extemporeaneous effusion* we can not determine; and we have no evidence to identify the manuscripts from which he preached. If those manuscripts contain all which the Doctor has preached, within a few years past, in our opinion, they would, on inspection, exhibit plenary evidence of the truth of the above charge, in relation to several denominations. It is to be presumed, that Dr. Holmes, in denying the above charge, understands "uncharitable and denunciatory," within the limits of their grammatical meaning, and according to the intention of those who used them concerning him. Although Dr. Holmes has not, in his preaching, named particular persons, or denominations, yet he has designated them with great accuracy, and excluded from the minds of his auditors all reasonable doubt in relation to the objects, at which he aimed, and against which he directed his authorities, arguments, censures, cautions, satire, condemnation, and terrors. As the Doctor's memory appears to have failed, in some degree, perhaps we can assist his mind, by asking him, whether he recollects several of the sermons preached by him since the origin of the society of Baptists and the society of Universalists in Cambridgeport, in which, he endeavored to prove, that some of the peculiar theological principles of each of those denominations are false, and that the doctrines of the Universalists are not only false, but dangerous in the extreme, and that those who adopt them, must do it at their everlasting peril? We would further inquire of Dr. Holmes, whether he has a definite recollection of a considerable number of his sermons, preached within the few years last past, relating to the doctrine of the Trinity, to future punishment, to the atonement, regeneration, faith, and other theological subjects, on which there is a diversity of opinion, between those, who call themselves Orthodox, and Unitarians? and whether, in the last mentioned sermons, he did not, at different times, repeatedly attempt, by scriptural authorities, by arguments, and by citing the opinions of authors, to convince his auditors, that the *peculiar theories of Unitarians*, on the subjects above mentioned, were *false, dangerous, and inconsistent with a rational expectation of salvation, and that his auditors woud incur the greatest possible danger, as to their future and eternal condition, by the adoption of them?* Does Dr. Holmes recollect the numerous efforts he has made to prove the truth of the Calvinistic doctrine of the Trinity, and his eloquent exclamations against the impiety of those, who deny that doctrine, and adopt the Unitarian theories concerning God and his only Son, Jesus Christ? Does Dr. Holmes remember, on having them suggested to him, how often the majority of this Parish, as to their principles and practice, during this controversy, have been censured and condemned by him, and those, whom he has invited to preach here? Has Dr. Holmes discovered a mode, in which he and those, whom he invites to preach, can pronounce the principles of the majority of his parishioners and of the denomination of Christians to which they belong, to be *false, opposed to the essential doctrines of the Gospel, to be another gospel, and dangerous to their souls, in the highest degree, and such as not only destroy all rational hope of future happiness, but expose them to everlasting punishment*, and yet venture to assert, that such preaching is not "uncharitable and denunciatory?" Dr. Holmes formerly exchanged with a large number of ministers of the liberal denomination. Within three or four years, he has refused to exchange with them and has said, that he cannot do it conscientiously. This *exclusive practice is uncharitable*. Is it not highly probable, that Dr. Holmes' preaching *has justified that practice and conformed to it?* It will be seen from some of Dr. Holmes' writings above, that he *considers himself responsible for what is preached by those, whom he introduces into his pulpit*; and there can be no very good reason, why he should not, on the same principle, be responsible for what has been preached in the *Parish*, by those, whom he has invited into it, and to whom *he and his friends have been approving auditors*. It

the Parish and the Rev. Dr. Holmes, and closed his address with a submission of the question—Is it expedient, proper, and just, that the relation of the Rev. Dr. Holmes to the First Parish in Cambridge, as their pastor, be dissolved? After

is stated is the “Account,” &c. p. 40, that “*the Orthodox regard Unitarians as having departed from the essential doctrines of the Gospel, and it is on this account that they decline exchanges with them.*” If this is the opinion of Dr. Holmes, as it must be presumed to be from its being published in the “Account,” it is such evidence as makes it very difficult to understand what Dr. Holmes means by denying the above charge. *The above note has not convinced us, that the charge is not true;* but we wish to have it fully understood, that, in our opinion, it is true and can be proved, not by *one witness only*, but by *many*. There were before the Council *several witnesses*, who harmonized with the *first witness*, who is the subject of the above note, in their testimony in relation to the uncharitable and denunciatory character of Dr. Holmes’ preaching. *Many other persons*, who have been *auditors* of Dr. Holmes, agree perfectly with the *witnesses*, who were examined, on that subject. *We can not now take Dr. Holmes’ opinions*, in relation to his preaching, as a *substitute for our own recollections of what we heard, felt, and understood*. The author of the above note knows, that it is a most vain thing for him to attempt to impeach the witness, whom he has assailed, and that no gentleman in the community has less to fear from such an attack, as all his acquaintance can testify, that he is highly distinguished for his moderation, candor, charity, veracity, justice, truth, prudence, as well as liberal and gentlemanly conduct. It is unfortunate for the author of the note, that *his sectarian feelings impelled him to make such an imperfect and mutilated report relative to that gentleman’s testimony*, as justice and propriety required the author of the note, either to report the whole testimony, and the whole of the subsequent conversations relating to it, and the circumstances attending those conversations, and, in particular, the excitement of those, who conversed with him, or to omit the subject entirely. Can it be imagined, that such a *mutilated account* is published for any purpose but that of making a *false impression* upon the minds of readers and of creating prejudice? There is a just suspicion, that the author of the note has restricted “denunciatory” to one of its several acceptations adapted to the state or his own mind and to the purpose of that note, without recollecting the various other significations of that word, and the right of the witness to use it in any one of its meanings, which conforms to good usage. This reference to the definitions of ‘denunciatory’ is made, to show the author of the note, that, if the witness had used that word; it would have been true in several of its grammatical senses, and that, before writing the note, he ought to have ascertained the meaning which the witness attached to it. If Dr. Holmes and those, who have preached for him, in this Parish, in his presence, and with his approbation, HAVE ACCUSED Unitarians with professing and teaching doctrines, which are false, opposed to “the essential doctrines of the Gospel,” inconsistent with a rational hope of salvation, and exposing them to future condemnation and everlasting punishment, and SOLEMNLY DECLARED, that those, who believe those Unitarian doctrines incur the displeasure of God, and PROCLAIMED that God will hereafter make them the objects of his wrath and of eternal misery, has not Dr. Holmes’ preaching, and that, for which he, on his own principle, is responsible, been “uncharitable and denunciatory?” Let the wise and impartial decide.

Dr. Webster in his quarto Dictionary defines “DENOUNCE”—

1. To declare solemnly; to proclaim in a threatening manner; to announce, or declare, as a threat.
2. To threaten by some external sign, or expression.
3. To inform against; to accuse, as to denounce one for neglect of duty.

See his definition of DENUNCIATION—

1. Publication, proclamation, annunciation, preaching; as a faithful denunciation of the Gospel. *Milner.*

See his other definitions of Denunciation and Denunciator.

See “Denuncio” and “Denunciatio” in Young’s Lat. Dict.

See “Denuntio” and “Denuntiatio” in Ainsw. Lat. Dict.

From an examination of the definitions of the original words from which Denounce and Denunciation are derived, it will appear that Dr. Webster has not attributed to them too great a latitude of meaning.

The other “prominent witness” alluded to and censured in the above cited

deliberating upon and viewing the facts and various evidence offered for our consideration and decision, this Council adopt the following votes.

Voted, That there is plenary evidence of the facts, that Dr. Holmes has materially varied in his ministerial and christian intercourse from that of his two immediate predecessors, and from that of more than thirty years of his own ministry;* that such change

note, has a perfect right to complain of the mutilation of his testimony, by the author of that note, in his very imperfect, partial, and censorious report of it. The author of the note much prefers the style of the satirist to that of the reporter, and the infliction of wounds to the disclosure of the truth. Dr. Holmes' preaching was often offensive to the majority of the parishioners, and not only this "prominent witness," but many others, were induced to worship, in other places, "one half the time," and some of them the whole time. This witness is not peculiar in his views in relation to the accessions to the Church, mentioned in his testimony, especially in relation to the **SEVEN ADMITTED AT ONE TIME**, which he supposed to have been the "result of a concerted plan of making a show." Were these seven persons all propounded for admission into the Church at the same time? Was there not an opportunity for admitting some of them before the others, if there had not been a plan for admitting them together? Was there any thing immoral, or irreligious, in the plan of admitting all of them, at one time, for the purpose of *showing* a large accession to the Church, in order to make a moral and religious impression on the minds of those, who should be spectators of their admission? Such a plan for the purpose of increasing the moral and religious effect of the ceremony was undoubtedly consistent with the best principles. The "prominent witness" did not say, that any one of the seven was not a suitable person to be a church member, or that the admission of any one of them was improper. The conclusion, which an impartial mind would, probably, draw from the testimony taken together, without any mutilation, or artful abridgment, would be, that the witness meant, that the admission of seven members to the Church at one time, if viewed alone, without attending to other facts, would lead to the conclusion of a greater religious excitement in the Parish than really existed. What, then, is this alleged "attack upon the character of the pastor, the deacons, and a majority of the male members of the Church?" It required a suspicious and uncharitable state of mind, and a morbid sensibility, and a satirical taste, and "the melancholy effects of long-indulged and over-wrought feeling," in the author of the note, to incline and enable him to write it, and then to call "the unhappy author" of the supposed attack to "repent." "The unhappy author" would be very wild in his imagination, if he should desire forgiveness, or anticipate it, from those, who approve "the attack" upon his character.

* "The two immediate predecessors of Dr. Holmes never exchanged with avowed Unitarians; and although Dr. Holmes himself has been slow to believe, in regard to certain individuals, that they were Unitarians, he has never intended to exchange with those who openly avowed the sentiment—and especially with those who rejected, as most Unitarians now do, the doctrines of grace." "*Account,*" &c. p. 46, note.

The Rev. Mr. Hilliard, the immediate predecessor of Dr. Holmes, did exchange with Unitarians, who were generally known to be of that denomination; and unless Mr. Hilliard was more ignorant of the theological theories of the ministers, with whom he exchanged, than other clergymen, and a great multitude of the laity were, there is an irresistible presumption that he knew perfectly that he did exchange with Unitarians. It never can be presumed, without a *gross violation* of the *principles of reason* and *rules of evidence*, that any minister *does not know* the theological denomination of his professional brethren, with whom he is intimately acquainted and with whom he exchanges. The pretence of such ignorance by a minister, advanced in years, extensively acquainted with society, devoted to historical and biographical researches, favorably situated for acquiring an extensive and accurate knowledge of professional men, especially of those of his own profession, would be a mockery of common sense, and an insult to the understandings of all, who should be called on to believe it. Dr. Appleton, the predecessor of Mr. Hilliard, adopted "orthodoxy and charity," for his motto, and his practice, as a minister and a man, conformed to it, and he maintained a pastoral intercourse with the most liberal pastors in this vicinity, and fully approved Mr. Hilliard, as his colleague. It will be perceived, that the phrase, "avowed Unitarians," is often used by Dr. Holmes and his friends, in a sense, not only peculiar, but in some degree, devious from the best usage. Do they

more essentially affects the peace, comfort, and edification of the Parish, than any mere change in speculation, or in points of dogmatical theology; that this change has been persisted in, contrary to the repeated remonstrances of a large majority of the Parish, consisting of about three fourths of the legal voters, including several members of the Church; that this course has greatly grieved them, and so far impaired their confidence in their pastor, as to preclude the possibility of continuing his ministerial relation to them, either with comfort to himself, or any prospect of advancing their religious interests.

Voted, That the First Parish in Cambridge have sufficient cause to terminate the contract subsisting between them and the Rev. Dr. Holmes, as their minister, and this council recommend the measure, as necessary to the existence and spiritual prosperity of the society.

This Council wish it to be distinctly understood, that the service, to which we have, in Providence, been called, is one of the most painful services of our life. We do not arraign, or condemn, the motives of the Rev. Dr. Holmes. We are happy to testify, that all our impressions of his course, during the peaceful state of his society, are associated with the most interesting and honorable views of his ministerial character and the christian spirit. We sympathize with him under his trials,* and devoutly pray, that the consolations and rewards of the religion he has preached may be his inheritance. We lament with this Parish, that the principles and practice of the times on which we have fallen, have, in any degree, interrupted the quiet

mean that a minister must proclaim with a trumpet, that he is a Unitarian, to make him "an avowed Unitarian?" and that one, who makes it generally known, by any of the common means of conveying information, that he is of that denomination, is not to be considered "an avowed Unitarian," because he has not publicly announced it by the loudest proclamation, or advertised himself as such? Has "Dr. Holmes himself, *been slow* to believe, in regard to certain individuals, that they were Unitarians?" How Dr. Holmes contrived to prevent the common, natural, effect of evidence on his understanding and has rendered himself "slow to believe" that evidence, which produced a general conviction and uniform belief in the minds of others, requires some explanation, to make it credible, that the susceptibilities of his mind are exceptions from the natural laws of intellect, and that, what produces conviction in other persons, produces rational doubt only in him.

"* The sympathy here expressed, if felt at all, must have been a feeling of a very extraordinary character;—like the sympathy of him who should knock down his neighbor and then sympathize with him because he did not stand;—or like the sympathy of him, who should take away another's living, and then sympathize with him because he was poor. The Council recommend Dr. Holmes' dismission, and then sympathize with him because he must be dismissed! They do all in their power to further the designs of his opposers, and add weight to his trials, and then sympathize with him under his trials!" "*Account,*" &c. p. 47, note.

The Council were called to hear the controversy between the First Parish in Cambridge and Dr. Holmes, and to decide it impartially, according to those principles of law, morality, and religion, which were justly applicable to it, without regard to mere pecuniary consequences, and without indulging any sympathies, which would produce a violation of those principles, in relation to the Parish or Dr. Holmes. Justice sees only the case to be determined, and is blind and insensible to every thing extrinsic to it, which has the least tendency to cause a deviation from righteous judgment; but after the decision, can consistently with perfect rectitude, see, feel, and sympathize with, the party, suffering from his own infringement of the rights of others. The most wise and impartial judge may exhibit perfection in his judicial character, without even the shadow of departure from the public rules prescribed to him, and yet retain and display all the best feelings, sympathies, and affections of a man and Christian. When the author of the above note composed it, his understanding must have been clouded with the monstrously erroneous opinion, that the members of the Council could not do their duty to the Parish, without being deprived of the ability and right to sympathize with Dr. Holmes after having done it. According to the principles of the author, if the members of the Council had violated the rights of the Parish by a decision in favor of Dr. Holmes, they could not have a right to make the Parish the object of their sympathies; but, if they had done it, such a decision, in the mind of the author, would undoubtedly have sanctified those sympathies and protected them against his censures and insults!!

and blighted the prospects of a society, which, from the earliest period of its existence, has known how good and how joyful it is for Christians to dwell together in unity. We honor the members of this Parish, for the marked deliberation, candor, frankness, veneration for the christian ministry, and for the institutions of the gospel, apparent in all their measures.* We offer them our sympathy and friendly aid. We urge them, in the exercise of charity and tenderness, to prosecute their future course. We implore them the guidance and benediction of heaven, and that this christian community may be built up in faith, order, purity, prosperity, charity, and peace.

Voted unanimously, to accept and publish the above as the result of Council.

EZRA RIPLEY, *Moderator.*

NATHANIEL THAYER, *Scribe.*

SAMUEL M. BURNSIDE, *Ass't Scribe.*

NATHANIEL THAYER, *Scribe.*

A true copy,

Agreeably to the vote of the Committee, an attested copy of the said Result was transmitted to Dr. Holmes.

On the foregoing result, the publishers of the "Account," &c. make the following remarks.

"As the whole question whether Dr. Holmes has, or has not, been regularly and legally dismissed from the First Parish in Cambridge, depends on the validity of the foregoing result, it will be necessary, at some time, to examine it with particular attention. All we shall attempt at present, will be to state the proper questions respecting it, and to offer a few remarks tending to lead the public mind to a correct decision.

"According to established ecclesiastical usage, and to the decisions of our courts, an *ex parte* council has no jurisdiction, unless it be impartially chosen, and unless a regular mutual council has been previously offered and refused. Now it will appear from the foregoing papers, that the committee of the Parish offered Dr. Holmes a mutual council, which he did not refuse. So far from this, he uniformly expressed his *readiness* and his *desire* for a Mutual Council, and only wished that the *Church*, as a party interested, and as a matter of right, might, if it pleased, be known in the calling of it. Accordingly, Dr. Holmes and the Church repeatedly offered to unite with the Committee of the Parish in calling a Mutual Council—a Council of which the said Committee should select one half—a Council, in which all their rights should be respected; which offer the Committee expressly and repeatedly rejected. Dr. Holmes requested the Committee to refer this proposal to the Parish for consideration, but they refused to do even that. And under these circumstances, they proceeded to call an *ex parte* Council—not an *impartial* one, but one composed entirely of their own *party*—by whom Dr. Holmes' dismissal was authorized and sanctioned.

"The questions necessary to be decided, in judging of this subject, are, *What is a regular, Mutual Council* for the dismission of a minister—such an one as is agreeable to the usages of Congregational churches, and as has been sanctioned by the courts

"* The readers of the foregoing pages will judge for themselves to how much honor Dr. Holmes' opposers are entitled for the properties here ascribed to them. We shall know, too, from henceforth, what measures a Council of 'liberal sentiments' esteem and honor, as the result of 'marked deliberation, candor, frankness, veneration for the christian ministry, and for the institutions of the gospel.' "Account," &c. p. 47, note.

The liberality manifested by the great author of the foregoing note, in granting to the readers of the "Account," &c. *liberty to judge for themselves*, is, unquestionably, unprecedented in his practice. We congratulate him on this first specimen of his liberality, which, although it appeared after a complete exhaustion of his *censures*, will probably command all the gratitude, which it deserves. This author, before the Council published their result, had confined his mind so strictly to the *charms of the orthodox creed*, and had so constantly viewed *all things* through that as a *medium*, that he really *did not know* "what measures a Council of *liberal sentiments*" esteem and honor, as the result of "marked deliberation, candor, frankness, and veneration for the christian ministry and for the institutions of the gospel;" and probably, when that result informed him, that those *traits of character* were not confined to *his denomination*, he was much surprized, and exclaimed, "We shall know, too, from henceforth." We have no doubt, that this valuable addition to his knowledge, by agitating his mind, will shake off the fetters of his creed, and will ultimately produce in him a far better mode of thinking, reasoning, and judging concerning men and

of Massachusetts? And, did the Committee of the Parish offer, and did Dr. Holmes refuse, such a Council? And in deciding these questions, it is not necessary to decide all the questions which may be started, on the subject of Councils. It is not necessary to decide the abstract question, Whether a regular Mutual Council for the dismissal of a pastor can be called by the Parish and the pastor *without the Church*. Though this is a question which our fathers, even down to the last generation, would have found no difficulty in deciding. For when the Church *objects* to the calling of such a Council, and *refuses* to unite in it, (as was the case with the Church at Sandwich,) —or when the Church *consents* to the measure, but chooses to *stand aloof*, and have *little to do with it*,) as was the case with the first Mutual Council at Dorchester,)—it may be admitted that the pastor and Parish may call a regular Council; and still, the question respecting the regularity of the Council, proposed by the Committee of the first Parish in Cambridge, remain undecided. For here, the Church did not object to a Mutual Council, and refuse to unite in it; nor did they choose to stand *alcof*, and have nothing to do with it. They wished a Mutual Council, offered one, urged one, and only desired, as they were a party vitally interested, that they might, in some proper way, be known in the transaction. And the Committee of the Parish refused them, rejected them, and would not suffer them to have part or lot in the matter. The proper question to be decided, therefore, in judging of the regularity of the Mutual Council, proposed by this Committee, and consequently of the validity of the doings of the *ex parte* Council, is, not whether a pastor and Parish can call a regular Mutual Council for the dismissal of the pastor, *when the Church objects*, and *refuses to unite*—nor whether a pastor and Parish can regularly call such a Council, *when the Church consents to the measure, but chooses to have no part in it*;—but the proper question is, *whether the pastor and Parish can regularly call such a Council, when the Church neither objects to the measure, nor chooses to stand aloof from it, but wishes and offers to have a proper part in it, and is REJECTED*. This obviously is the question, on which the validity of Dr. Holmes' dismission depends; and *how shall it be decided?* There can be no doubt how it will be decided by Congregational Churches, the world over, if we except a few Unitarian Churches, calling themselves Congregational, in and around the metropolis of Massachusetts. But how will it be decided by the Supreme Court of this Commonwealth? They will undoubtedly be called upon to decide it; and *what will be their decision?* On this subject, it does not become us at present so much as to conjecture. One thing is certain, they will have no precedents to guide them to a decision; as no similar question is known to have been decided by any Court in Massachusetts. It shall be our prayer and hope that they may be guided by that wisdom which is from above.” “*Account,*” &c. pp. 47—50.

The Committee, several times, offered Dr. Holmes a Mutual Council, labored a long time to obtain from him a definite, unambiguous, and intelligible answer, and he *refused it*, unless the *Church*, as a *body*, *distinct from the Parish*, were admitted, as a *party*, as will appear from his answers to the Committee's several proposals. (See above, from page 17 to 20.) At the meeting of the Parish at which the Committee were appointed, the *memorial of the Church, to be admitted as a party*, distinct from the Parish, in relation to the proposed Council, was presented to the Parish, and considered, and the Parish *did not grant the prayer thereof*, because they thought the Church had no *legal right* to be a party, separate from the Parish; because the Church had no controversy with Dr. Holmes, and because the *majority of the Church, as parishioners, had voted, at all the parish meetings, against the proceedings of the Parish, in relation to Dr. Holmes, and had, at other times, uniformly opposed the Parish, and justified and supported Dr. Holmes in his opposition to the Parish*. After this decision by the Parish against the claim of the Church to be a party, and after the Committee had proposed a Mutual Council to Dr. Holmes, and had spent much time to obtain the Doctor's answer, he requested the Com-

measures, than he ever had before, and a far more correct and charitable one, than he could possibly have derived from his creed independently of the assistance of a Council of “liberal sentiments.”

mittee to refer this claim of the Church to the Parish for consideration ; which he Committee refused to do, because the Parish had as aforesaid, decided against that claim, as Dr. Holmes and the Church well knew. Dr. Holmes, in answer to the proposal, by the Committee, of a Mutual Council, merely expressed a willingness to have a Mutual Council, on condition of the Church's being admitted as a party, and this was expressed passively, and by way of answer only ; but it will be very difficult for Dr. Holmes to show, by any of his papers, that he became an actor and the PROPOSER OF A COUNCIL ; the committee never understood any one of Dr. Holmes' papers to them to contain such a proposal. Where is the paper, in which Dr. Holmes and the Church offer or propose to the Committee a Mutual Council ? Dr. Holmes and the Church did not wish for a Council, but for the submission of the Parish to them, and it is manifest that their policy was to avoid a Council, as the history of their management in relation to a Council, we think, will show.

The *ex parte Council* was impartially chosen and was composed of members, not only perfectly impartial, but very eminently qualified in all other respects, to investigate and decide the case submitted to them. Neither law, nor reason, required the Parish to choose, as members of that Council, those who had adopted the Calvinistic exclusive system, and firmly united themselves to support it, and decided the most important question in the case, before hand, and determined to uphold that system against all evidence and right.

The Church is not, and in law cannot be, a party to a contract between a Parish and the minister ; and there cannot be any sound reason for their having a legal right against the consent of the Parish, to be a party in a question relating to the dissolution of such contract. The imagination, concerning the decision "our fathers" would have made of this question, does not require an answer ; as the decisions made before the *fathers* of the Constitution framed and adopted that, are unimportant ; and however well they may be adapted to the taste or principles of the author of that imagination, it is not probable that the supposed decision will be the rule of our law, until that ignorance, bigotry, superstition, persecution, and ecclesiastical usurpation, with which too many of "our fathers" were familiar, shall appear again to afflict, not only Baptists and Quakers, but society in general. "Our fathers," when they had the legal right of electing pastors, by the colony and province laws, if they wanted an Ecclesiastical Council, never condescended to invite, or permit the inhabitants of the town, who supported the pastor, to be a party in the choice of such Council. Parishes now do nothing more than to act on the same principle then adhered to by "our fathers," as church members : the rule of law being now changed. The legal questions stated, are founded on a supposed state of facts and law, which is not true ; the answer to them will, therefore, be omitted, until it shall be necessary for the writer of those questions to examine this case "with particular attention." In relation to the Supreme Judicial Court, the writer's conclusion, on page 50 of the "Account," &c. is worthy of notice. It is, "it shall be our prayer and hope that they may be guided by that wisdom which is from above."

The Parish committee having been requested in writing, by eighty-

eight of the legal voters of the Parish, to call a Parish meeting to act on the following articles, viz. :

“ 1. To choose a Moderator for said meeting.

“ 2. To hear the report, or reports, of any Committee, or Committees, heretofore appointed by said Parish, who have not already reported, and to act thereon.

“ 3. To hear, and act on, the report of the Committee, which [said Parish, at a legal meeting thereof, on the 22d day of December last past, by votes, passed by said Parish on that day, duly chose and appointed, to propose to the Rev. Doct. Holmes, the Pastor of said Parish, to unite with them in calling a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, to advise, in relation to all differences and matters in controversy, existing between him and said Parish, and, in case said Holmes should not accede to such proposal, for a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, forthwith to proceed to the choice of an *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council, for the purpose aforesaid ; an inspection of said votes in the office of the Clerk of said Parish will show the precise extent of the authority thereby given to said last mentioned Committee.

“ 4. To hear, and act on, the result of the *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council lately elected by said last mentioned Committee, for the purpose mentioned in the last preceding article ; which Council commenced its session in the Old Conrt House in said Parish, on the 19th day of May current, and continued its session there till the 21st day of May current, on which last mentioned day, said Council published their said result, in writing.

“ 5. To see, if said Parish will, pursuant to said result of said *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council, and for the reasons and causes therein mentioned, dismiss the Rev. Doct. Holmes from his office of Pastor of said Parish, and terminate the contract subsisting between said Parish and him, as their Pastor, or Minister.

“ 6. If said Parish shall dismiss the Rev. Doct. Holmes from his office of Pastor of said Parish, as aforesaid, to see, if said Parish will appoint a Committee to settle with him, in relation to his salary and to all demands by him against said Parish by virtue of the contract between said Parish and him, as their Pastor, and in relation to all the real estate, whereof he is seized, as such Pastor of said Parish, and belonging to said Parish, or either of them, which said Holmes, as such Pastor, now holds and enjoys ; and to pay him, what shall be justly due to him, under, and by virtue of, said contract, on such settlement, and any other, or further, sum, which said Parish shall, by vote, direct and authorize said last mentioned Committee to pay him, or which said Parish shall, by vote, grant him, on any equitable principle, although not due to him, in strictness of law.

“ 7. If said Parish shall, as above mentioned, dismiss the Rev. Doct. Holmes from his office of Pastor of said Parish, to see if said Parish will appoint a Committee to take care of the meeting-house of said Parish and the pulpit therein, so far as said meeting-house and pulpit shall be necessary, or be wanted, for religious purposes, and to procure and employ, for said Parish, a suitable preacher, or preachers, to supply said pulpit, and to pay such preacher, or preachers, for supplying said pulpit, by drawing orders on the Treasurer of said Parish, or otherwise, as shall be expedient.

“ 8. To see, if said Parish will choose a Committee to represent, and act for, said Parish, at such time, or times, and in such way and manner, as said Committee, or a majority of them, shall think best, in relation to any subjects, matters, and things, and any, and either of them, which are, or is, or shall be, in controversy or dispute, in any way whatever, in Court, or out of Court, between said Parish and the said Rev. Doct. Holmes, and in all things incident, and in any way relating thereto.

“ 9. To see, if said Parish will appoint, authorize, and require a Committee to procure from the records and files of the Church in said Parish, attested copies of all parts of said records and files, relating in any way, to the fund, or funds, now in the possession, and under the care of said Church, or the Deacons thereof, and to use all legal and proper means for the purpose of procuring said copies.”

issued their warrant for such meeting, to be held on the 8th of June, 1829.

PARISH MEETING, JUNE 8, A. D. 1829.

A legal meeting of the freeholders and other inhabitants of the First Parish in Cambridge, in the County of Middlesex, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, qualified by law to vote in Parish affairs, was held at the old court-house in said Parish, on Monday, the eighth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine.

The warrant for calling said meeting having been read by the Clerk, it was voted to elect a Moderator by ballot, to preside at said meeting, and

Abel Whitney was unanimously elected Moderator of said Meeting.

The Committee appointed by votes of said Parish, on the twenty-second day December last past, to propose to the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the pastor of said Parish, to unite with them in calling a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, &c. presented the following

REPORT.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

To the First Parish in Cambridge, in the County of Middlesex.

Whereas said Parish, at a legal meeting thereof, on the twenty-second day of December last past, by votes passed by said Parish on that day, duly chose and appointed the subscribers, a Committee to propose to the Rev. Dr. Abiel Holmes, the pastor of said Parish, to unite with them in calling a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, to advise, in relation to all differences and matters in controversy, existing between him and said Parish, and, in case said Holmes should not accede to such proposal, for a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, forthwith to proceed to the choice of an *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council, for the purpose aforesaid; an inspection of which votes will show the precise extent of the authority thereby given to said Committee.

And whereas the third article in the warrant, which has been duly issued for a meeting of said Parish, at the old court-house in said Parish, on Monday, the eighth day of June current, is to hear and act on the report of said Committee; said Committee now make to said Parish the following report of their doings and proceedings, and of facts, relative to the objects and purposes of their appointment. The Clerk of said Parish, previous to the thirty-first day of December last past, transmitted to said Holmes an attested copy of the record of the votes, passed by said Parish, at said meeting thereof, on said twenty-second day of December last. Said Committee, on the thirty-first day of said December, met and chose Abraham Hilliard, chairman, and William J. Whipple, clerk. Said Committee, pursuant to said votes, by which they were appointed as aforesaid, and for the purposes therein and above mentioned, on the first of January, A. D. 1829, made known to said Holmes their said appointment and the purposes of it, and continued their written correspondence with him, relative to an Ecclesiastical Council for the purposes abovementioned, until the thirteenth day of April last, inclusive, and in their letters, or written communications, addressed and sent by them to the said Rev. Dr. Holmes, they several times proposed to him to unite with them, as such Committee as aforesaid, in calling a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, for the purposes above stated; which letters, or written communications, are of the respective dates following, to wit: January 1st, A. D. 1829; February 9th, A. D. 1829; March 9th, A. D. 1829; March 18th, A. D. 1829; April 1st, A. D. 1829; and April 13th, A. D. 1829, and are herewith exhibited, and constitute said written correspondence on the part of said Committee, in behalf of said Parish. Said Holmes, on his part, in answer to the abovementioned letters, or written communications, sent by said Committee to him as aforesaid, sent to them several letters, or written communications of the respective dates next following, to wit: January 1st, A. D. 1829; January 28th, 1829; February 14th, 1829; March 14th, 1829; March 26th, 1829; and April 8th, 1829, which, with two written communications from the Church of said Parish, made to him, and by him enclosed and transmitted to said Committee, March 26th, 1829, and April 8th, 1829, constitute the whole of said written correspondence, on the part of said Holmes, and are herewith exhibited. Said Committee, from a careful, critical, and repeated perusal and consideration of the abovementioned letters, or written communications, sent by the said Rev. Dr. Holmes to them, fully understood and were perfectly convinced, that he de-

clined and refused to unite with them, as such Committee as aforesaid, in calling a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, for the purposes above mentioned, unless said Committee would allow and admit said Church, as a body distinct from said Parish, and from said Holmes, as the Pastor of said Parish, to take a part and to act in the election of said proposed Council, and in the hearing or trial before it, of the case above mentioned, between said Parish and said Holmes ; and said Committee believe, that all intelligent, candid, and impartial persons, who shall read and critically examine said last mentioned letters, or written communications, so sent to them by said Holmes, will, and must, necessarily understand them as said Committee did, as above stated. Said Holmes, in relation to such proposed Council, claimed rights for said Church, and they claimed rights for themselves, which appeared to said Committee contrary to the Constitution and laws of this Commonwealth, contrary to the decisions of our Supreme Judicial Court, and inconsistent with the rights of said Parish ; and said Holmes required said Committee to allow said rights, so claimed by him and said Church, as a condition of his uniting with said Committee in calling a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, for the purposes above stated, and unless said rights were so allowed by said Committee, he would not unite with them for that purpose. Said Committee, in their said letter, or written communication, of April 13, 1829, sent to said Holmes, as aforesaid, stated to him, that they considered him as refusing to agree to their proposal for such mutual Council, and that, agreeably to their statement in their then last communication to him, they would proceed to the choice of an *ex parte* Council, to hear and decide on the complaints of said Parish ; to which last mentioned letter said Holmes sent no answer to said Committee. The said Rev. Dr. Holmes having as aforesaid refused to accept the proposal for a mutual Ecclesiastical Council, made to him repeatedly as above stated, by said Committee, pursuant to the authority given them as aforesaid by said Parish, said Committee met on the sixteenth day of April last past, and then elected the Pastor of, and a delegate from, each of the seven Churches hereinafter mentioned, to compose an *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council, for the purposes above mentioned ; which seven Churches are as follows, to wit :

The Church in Concord under the pastoral care of Rev. Ezra Ripley, D. D.				
The Church in Worcester	"	"	"	Rev. Aaron Bancroft, D. D.
The Church in Lancaster	"	"	"	Rev. Nathaniel Thayer, D. D.
The Church in Roxbury	"	"	"	Rev. Eliphalet Porter, D. D.
The Church in Salem	"	"	"	Rev. James Flint, D. D.
The Church in Portland	"	"	"	Rev. Ichabod Nichols, D. D.
The Church in Portsmouth	"	"	"	Rev. Nathan Parker, D. D.

and said Committee, on said sixteenth day of April last, pursuant to said election made by them, issued their letters missive to each of said Pastors, so elected as aforesaid, and to the Church under his pastoral care, and thereby requested each of said seven Churches, by its Pastor and a Delegate from each, to attend, as members of an Ecclesiastical Council, for the purposes above mentioned, at the old court-house in said Parish, on Tuesday, the nineteenth day of May last, at 10 o'clock, A. M. Said Committee, by their letter to said Holmes, dated May 9, 1829, sent by them to him on that day, gave him notice of the above mentioned election by them of an *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council, for the purposes aforesaid, and of the persons elected to compose that Council, and of the above mentioned time and place, appointed for the session of said Council. Pursuant to said election and said letters missive, on said nineteenth day May last, at said old court-house in said Parish, the following persons, so elected as aforesaid, to compose said *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council, attended ; to wit, from Concord, the said Ezra Ripley, D. D. and Deacon Reuben Brown, jun. as a delegate ; from Roxbury, the said Eliphalet Porter, D. D. and Deacon William Davis, as a delegate ; from Worcester, the said Aaron Bancroft, D. D. and brother Samuel M. Burnside, as a delegate ; from Lancaster, the said Nathaniel Thayer, D. D. and Deacon Joel Wilder, as a delegate ; from Salem, the said James Flint, D. D. and brother Zechariah F. Silsbee, as a delegate ; from Portsmouth, the said Nathan Parker, D. D. without a delegate ; but said Ichabod Nichols, D. D. did not attend, nor did any delegate from his church attend. When the above named members of the said *ex parte* Council, who attended as aforesaid, had assembled in said court-house, on said nineteenth day of May last, said Committee requested them to proceed and hear the case, between said Parish and

the said Rev. Dr. Holmes, for which they were elected as above stated, and they accordingly proceeded, and elected the said Ezra Ripley, D. D. Moderator, and the said Nathaniel Thayer, D. D. Scribe, and the said Samuel M. Burnside, Assistant Scribe, and then proceeded, after an introductory prayer by the said Ezra Ripley, D. D. to hear the said case, and after a full and impartial hearing and consideration of the same, on the twenty-first day of May last past, published their result, in writing, signed by said Ezra Ripley, as Moderator, and by said Nathaniel Thayer, as Scribe, and said Samuel M. Burnside, as Assistant Scribe; a true copy of which result, attested by said Nathaniel Thayer, as Scribe, is now in the possession of said Committee, and ready to be exhibited to said Parish. The business above mentioned, for which said Committee were appointed as aforesaid, was so important to said Parish, that they considered it expedient to employ able counsel, and they, therefore, in behalf of said Parish, employed the Hon. Samuel Hoar, Jr. Esquire, who has examined the numerous and various proceedings of said Parish and of said Committee, relating to the matters in controversy between said Parish and the said Rev. Dr. Holmes, and has also examined said result, and considers said proceedings and said result conformable to law and to the principles of substantial justice. All the writings above mentioned, relating to the aforesaid business, but not forming part of said correspondence, are herewith exhibited. All which is respectfully submitted by

ABRAHAM HILLIARD, ABEL WHITNEY, JOSEPH HOLMES, FRANCIS DANA, WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE, SYLVANUS PLYMPTON, JOB WYETH.	} <i>the Committee above mentioned.</i>
--	--

Cambridge, June 8, 1829.

The foregoing Report having been read, it was voted, that the correspondence between the said Committee and the Rev. Dr. Holmes relative to a mutual or *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council be read; and said correspondence was accordingly read.

On the third article in the warrant for the present meeting of said Parish, the correspondence of the Committee therein mentioned with the Rev. Dr. Holmes therein named, relative to such mutual, or *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council as is therein mentioned, for the purpose therein stated, having been read; and the Report, mentioned in said article, having also been read, it was *Voted* unanimously, that said Report be accepted, and that all the acts, doings, and proceedings of said Committee, in, and relating to, the business for which said Committee was appointed by said Parish, be, and the same are hereby fully approved, ratified, and confirmed, in all respects, and that said Report and this vote be recorded by the Clerk of said Parish; that the writings by said Committee, shewing their said doings and proceedings, and relating thereto, and that all letters and writings, which constitute said correspondence, and which relate thereto, be filed in the office of the Clerk of said Parish.

[The foregoing Result of Council, (see pp. 82 to 89,) was then read. It is deemed unnecessary again to repeat it.]

Whereupon, on the fourth article in the warrant for the present meeting of said Parish, it was *Voted* unanimously, that the result therein mentioned of the Ecclesiastical Council therein mentioned, be and hereby is fully approved and accepted by said Parish, and that said result and this vote thereon be recorded, by the Clerk of said Parish on the records of said Parish.

On the fifth article in the warrant for this meeting of said Parish, it was unanimously *Voted*, that, pursuant to the result, mentioned in said fifth article, of the *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council therein mentioned, which result has been, by vote, fully approved and accepted by said Parish, and for the reasons and causes mentioned in said result, the Rev. Dr. Abiel Holmes be, and he hereby is, dismissed from his office of minister of the Gospel, and teacher of piety, religion, and morality in said Parish, and that all connexion between said Holmes, as such minister, or teacher, and said Parish, do, and shall henceforth cease.

On the sixth article in the warrant for the present meeting of said Parish; said Parish having, by vote, dismissed the Rev. Dr. Holmes from his office of pastor of said Parish, as expressed in said vote, it was *Voted* unanimously, that

said Parish will appoint a Committee for the several purposes mentioned in said sixth article, and that Abraham Hilliard, Abel Whitney, Joseph Holmes, Francis Dana, William J. Whipple, Sylvanus Plympton, and Job Wyeth be the Committee for said purposes, *to wit*, to settle with said Holmes, in relation to his salary, and to all demands by him against said Parish by virtue of the contract between said Parish and him, as their pastor, until his dismission by said Parish, and in relation to all the real estate, whereof he was seized, as such pastor of said Parish, until said dismission, and belonging to said Parish, or either of them, which said Holmes, as such pastor, held and enjoyed until said dismission; and to pay him what shall be justly due to him under, and by virtue of, said contract, on such settlement, and any other, or further sum, which said Parish shall, by vote, direct and authorize said last mentioned Committee to pay him, on any equitable principle, although not due to him in strictness of law; and said Parish, in addition to what is due to said Holmes to this day, further hereby grant to said Holmes, on equitable principles, but not as his legal right, the sum of one hundred and seventy-three dollars and eighty-two cents, equal to the pecuniary part of the salary, which would have become payable to him, as pastor of said Parish, for three months from this eighth day of June current, the day of said meeting, had he not been dismissed as aforesaid, from said office; and the use and occupation of the several parcels of real estate heretofore holden and enjoyed by him, as such pastor of said Parish, until the twenty-fifth day of January next, but no longer; which said sum of one hundred and seventy-three dollars and eighty-two cents, said last mentioned Committee are hereby authorized and required to draw from the treasury of said Parish, and to deliver and pay to said Holmes, on, or before the eighth day of September next, which last mentioned sum of money includes what would be payable both from the Treasurer of the Parish, and from the Trustees of the Ministerial Fund for said three months.

On the seventh article in the warrant for this meeting of said Parish, said Parish having, by vote, dismissed the Rev. Dr. Holmes from his office of pastor of said Parish, as expressed in the vote of said Parish, this day passed on the fifth article in said warrant, it was Voted unanimously, that said Parish will, and they do hereby appoint Abraham Hilliard, Abel Whitney, Joseph Holmes, William J. Whipple, Francis Dana, Sylvanus Plympton, and Job Wyeth, a Committee to take care of the meeting-house of said Parish, and the pulpit therein, so far as said meeting-house and pulpit shall be necessary or be wanted for religious purposes, and to procure and employ for said Parish a suitable preacher or preachers to supply said pulpit, and to pay such preacher or preachers, for supplying said pulpit, by drawing orders on the treasurer of said Parish, or otherwise, as shall be expedient.

On the eighth article in the warrant for the present meeting of said Parish, it was Voted unanimously, that said Parish will appoint a Committee for the purpose therein mentioned, and that said Parish do hereby appoint Abraham Hilliard, Abel Whitney, Joseph Holmes, Francis Dana, William J. Whipple, Sylvanus Plympton, and Job Wyeth, a Committee for said purposes, *to wit*, to represent, and act for, said Parish, at such time, or times, and in such way and manner, as said Committee, or a majority of them, shall think best, in relation to any subjects, matters, and things, and any, or either of them, which are, or is, or shall be, in controversy, or dispute, in any way whatever, in Court, or out of Court, between said Parish and the said Rev. Dr. Holmes, and in all things incident, and in any way relating to.

On the ninth article in the warrant for the present meeting of said Parish, it was Voted unanimously, that said Parish will appoint, and they do hereby appoint Abraham Hilliard, Abel Whitney, Joseph Holmes, Francis Dana, William J. Whipple, Sylvanus Plympton, and Job Wyeth, a Committee for the purpose mentioned in that article, and they hereby authorize and require said Committee to procure from the records and files of the church in said Parish, attested copies of all parts of said records and files, relating in any way to the fund or funds now in the possession, and under the care of said church, or the deacons thereof, and to use all legal and proper means for the purpose of procuring said copies.

Voted, That the thanks of the Parish be presented to the Committee of the

Parish appointed on the 22d day of December last past, for the faithful manner in which they have attended to the duties assigned them.

Voted, That this meeting be dissolved.

A true record. Attest,

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
Clerk of said Parish.

A true copy. Attest,

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
Clerk of said Parish.

At a meeting of the Committee of the First Parish in Cambridge, appointed by votes of said Parish on this 8th day of June, A. D. 1829, held on the same day, it was

Voted, That Abraham Hilliard be Chairman, and William J. Whipple be Clerk of said Committee.

A true record. Attest. WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE, Clerk.

The Committee presented to Dr. Holmes, on the 12th of June, a communication, of which the following is a copy.

TO THE REV. DR. HOLMES,

SIR.—The subscribers, having, at a legal meeting of the qualified voters of the First Parish in Cambridge, held on the 8th day of June instant, by vote of said Parish, been appointed a Committee to take care of the meeting-house of said Parish and the pulpit therein, so far as said meeting-house and pulpit shall be necessary, or be wanted for religious purposes, and to procure and employ for said Parish, a suitable preacher or preachers, to supply said pulpit, hereby make known to you, that in pursuance of said vote, they have employed a preacher to supply the pulpit in the meeting-house of the First Parish in Cambridge on the next ensuing Sabbath, that they will procure and employ a preacher or preachers for the succeeding Sabbaths, and that your services will not be required or authorized in the public religious services in the meeting-house in said Parish hereafter. We are, respectfully,

Your obed't serv'ts,

ABRAHAM HILLIARD,
ABEL WHITNEY,
JOSEPH HOLMES,
FRANCIS DANA,
WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
SYLVANUS PLYMPTON,
JOB WYETH,

}
Committee
of
said Parish.

Cambridge, June 11, 1829.

At a meeting of the Committee of the First Parish in Cambridge, held on the eleventh day of June, A. D. 1829, it was unanimously voted, that a communication, of which the foregoing is a copy, be transmitted to Rev. Dr. Holmes.

Attest. WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE, Clerk.

Soon after said paper was transmitted, on the same day, the Committee received the following.

DR. HOLMES TO COMMITTEE.

Cambridge, 11 June, 1829.

SIR.—I received yesterday through you, as Parish Clerk, a certified copy of the votes of the Parish, passed on the 8th instant. By these votes, I perceive that my connexion with the Parish, as their minister, is declared to be dissolved, and that a dismission, in pursuance of the Result of the *ex parte* Council, recently called by said Parish, is supposed to take place. As I have previously entered my Protest against the jurisdiction of said Council, and have denied their right to take any cognizance of the Complaint exhibited against me by the Parish, I now give notice to you, and through you, to the inhabitants of the Parish, that I still consider myself as the lawful minister of the Parish, and hold myself ready to perform any and all the duties, in or out of the pulpit, which belong to my office as pastor of the First Church and Society in Cambridge.

Yours,
A. HOLMES.

You are requested to communicate this to the Committee of the Parish, who have cognizance of the subject; and I ask the favor of an early answer.

A. H.

To William J. Whipple, Esq. Clerk of
the First Parish in Cambridge.

REPLY.

Cambridge, June 12, 1829.

To THE REV. DR. HOLMES,

SIR,—In your letter, dated 11 June, 1829, addressed to William J. Whipple, Esq., and by him communicated to the subscribers, the Committee of the First Parish in Cambridge, “who have cognizance of the subject” mentioned in that letter, you acknowledge the receipt of “a certified copy of the votes of the Parish, passed on the 8th instant,” and you deny the jurisdiction of the *ex parte* Council therein mentioned, and the legality of your dismissal from the office of Pastor of said Parish, by one of said votes, pursuant to the result of said Council, and you notify the inhabitants of said Parish, that you still consider yourself “as the lawful minister of the Parish, and hold” yourself “ready to perform any and all duties, in and out of the pulpit, which belong to” your “office as pastor of the First Church and Society in Cambridge.” In answer to your said letter, said Committee, in behalf of said Parish, state to you, that said Council had jurisdiction of the Complaint exhibited to said Council against you; that said result is legal and valid; that said dismissal from said office conforms to said result and to law; that your connexion with said Parish as their minister is legally dissolved; that you are not the minister, or pastor, of said Parish, nor have you been such minister, or pastor, since said dismissal; that as such minister, or pastor, you do not owe any such duties as aforesaid to said Parish, and that said Parish refuses to accept from you any service, or services, as such minister, or pastor, thereof. Hereafter you cannot occupy nor use the pulpit of the meeting-house of said Parish, as it will be exclusively appropriated to such preacher, or preachers, as said Parish shall employ to supply it.

We are, Sir, respectfully,

Your obedient servants,

ABRAHAM HILLIARD,
ABEL WHITNEY,
JOSEPH HOLMES,
FRANCIS DANA,
SYLVANUS PLYMPTON,
WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
JOB WYETH,

*The above mentioned
Committee
of said Parish.*

At a meeting of the above-mentioned Committee of the First Parish in Cambridge, appointed on the eighth day of June instant, holden on the twelfth day of June instant, it was

Voted unanimously, That the foregoing reply be made to the communication from Dr. Holmes, dated the 11th of June instant, addressed to William J. Whipple, as Clerk of said Parish.

A true record. Attest.

WILLIAM J. WHIPPLE,
Clerk of said Committee.

June 12, 1829.

Immediately after the dismission of the Rev. Dr. Holmes, by the vote of the Parish, and notice to him thereof, the Committee appointed by the Parish, invited the ordained ministers hereinafter named to preach for the Parish, and, in behalf of the Parish, employed preachers to supply their places.

The next Sabbath after the dismission of Dr. Holmes, the Rev. Dr. Ripley, of Concord, preached in the meeting-house of the Parish. Since that time, the Rev. Mr. Francis, the Rev. Dr. Foster, Rev. Mr. Green, Rev. Mr. Whitman, Rev. Mr. Huntoon, Rev. Mr. Stetson, Rev. Mr. Hedge, Rev. Mr. Walker, and Rev. Mr. Greenwood, have

preached in said meeting-house, in the above order of their names. We have seldom seen larger auditories in that meeting-house, within the last three years, than the above named ministers have attracted there. The parishioners, who have heard the above named gentlemen, have not only approved, but admired, their preaching, which was, at the same time, adapted to attract powerfully the attention of the auditors, to impress moral and religious truths deeply upon their minds, and to excite a lively taste for that theology in which reason and divine revelation harmonize. The Church of the Parish have organized by choosing a Deacon and Clerk. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered, at the usual time, by the Rev. Mr. Green. Several new members have been admitted into the Church. There is a pleasing prospect of charity and Christian harmony among those, who continue to attend public worship in the Parish meeting-house.

APPENDIX.

Proceedings of the Church of the First Parish in Cambridge, being the First Church in Cambridge, since the dismission of the Rev. Dr. Holmes.

As those, who adhere to Dr. Holmes since his dismission, appear disposed to question the validity of all proceedings, both of said Parish and said Church, in any way relating to the above controversy, it may be proper, here, to state the following acts of the Church subsequent to that dismission.

"At a meeting of the Church of the First Parish in Cambridge, being the First Church in Cambridge, on the twelfth day of July, A. D. 1829, by adjournment of the meeting of said Church, duly notified and held, at the meeting-house of said Parish, on the 28th day of June, last past—

"Whereas the First Parish in Cambridge, by vote, on the eight day of June last past, pursuant to the previous result of the Ecclesiastical Council mentioned in that that vote, dismissed the Rev. Abiel Holmes from his office of minister of the gospel and teacher of piety, religion, and morality, in said Parish, and dissolved all connexion between said Holmes, as such minister, or teacher, and said Parish—

"And whereas, since that day, said Parish, by their committee, duly appointed for that purpose, have employed preachers to supply the pulpit in the meeting-house of said Parish, who have, from that day to the present time, on every Sabbath, preached in that pulpit, to the inhabitants of said Parish, and numerous other persons, who have attended public worship there—

"And whereas William Hilliard and James Munroe, who were the deacons of the Church of said Parish, before, and at the time of said dismission of said Holmes from his said office, as such minister, or teacher, as aforesaid, and divers other persons, who were at that time members of said church, have wholly neglected to attend public worship in said meeting-house with said Parish, and to attend the meetings and the communion of said church there, and have adhered to said Holmes, as their minister, and have exclusively attended public worship in the Court-house, under the preaching of said Holmes, and other ministers there, and have had the sacrament of the Lord's supper administered there by said Holmes, and said Hilliard and Munroe have acted as deacons at the administration thereof there, and wholly neglected the Church of said Parish and left it destitute of deacons to perform the usual and customary duties of that office in said Church; which said conduct of said Hilliard and Munroe, in relation to said Church, amounts either to a legal abandonment and abdication of their said offices of deacons of said Church, or at least to a sufficient legal cause for dismissing them from their said offices.

And whereas, it is necessary, under existing circumstances, to have a deacon or deacons, a moderator, and a clerk or scribe in said Church; in the facts above recited, said Church consider it, not only their right, but also their duty, at this time, to pass the following votes, *to wit* :—

Voted,—As said William Hilliard and James Munroe have separated themselves, as above stated, from said Church, and abdicated or abandoned their offices as deacons therein, and left said Church destitute of a deacon, that said Hilliard and Munroe, severally be removed and dismissed from his office of deacon of said Church, if the above stated facts do not amount, in law, to a legal abdication or abandonment of said office of deacon; and that the office of deacon in said church is now vacant, and that it is expedient and necessary now to elect a deacon or deacons thereof.

Voted, To elect by ballot.

Voted, That Abel Whitney be a deacon of said Church.

Voted, That Sylvanus Plympton be the Clerk or Scribe of said Church.

Voted, That the Clerk or Scribe of said Church be, and he hereby is authorized

and empowered to appoint, notify and call the meetings of said Church, whenever it shall be necessary or expedient.

Voted, That the said Sylvanus Plympton, the Clerk or Scribe of said Church, be authorized and required to transmit to said William Hilliard and James Munroe, an attested copy of the record of the foregoing votes, and of the foregoing recitals introductory to said votes.

A true copy,

Attest,

Cambridge, July 15, 1829.

SYLVANUS PLYMPTON,

Clerk of said Church.

REPLY TO THE ABOVE.

Cambridge, July 21, 1829.

SIR,—We received yours of the 15th inst. on Sunday, at nine o'clock, A. M. in which you give the proceedings of, what you style, the First Church in Cambridge, adopted by them on the 12th inst. We had previously supposed, that in all cases, where an individual, or individuals, were accused of any misdemeanour, or mal-practice, that the allegations, upon which the complaint was founded, would be made known to the party accused, that they might have an opportunity to answer, and show cause, if any they had, why judgment should not be had, and sentence pronounced. But as in the present case, this course has not been adopted, and as we deny altogether the right of the body, which you represent, proceeding to exercise this, their supposed authority, we deem it inexpedient to take any farther notice of your communication at this time.

Yours, &c.

WILLIAM HILLIARD,

JAMES MUNROE,

Deacons of the First Church in Cambridge.

To Dr. **SYLVANUS PLYMPTON.**

The meeting of the Church of the Parish, on the 28th day of June, 1829, was duly notified, in the usual way, from the pulpit, and the adjournment of that meeting was made, conformably to the common usage, to the 12th day of July, 1829, when said Church passed the above vote, relative to said William Hilliard and James Munroe. In their reply to that vote, they say, " We had previously supposed, that in all cases, where an individual, or individuals, were accused of any misdemeanour, or mal-practice, that the allegations, upon which the complaint was founded, would be made known to the party accused, that they might have an opportunity to answer, and show cause, if any they had, why judgment should not be had, and sentence pronounced." Said meeting and adjournment of the Church were duly and regularly notified, and if said Hilliard and Munroe had been in the place where the duties of their office required them to be, they would have had full and complete notice; and they have no right to complain of a want of notice, when their own omission of duty was the only cause of their not being notified. The facts stated in the recital to said vote are true; and said Hilliard and Munroe, instead of admitting those facts to constitute " a misdemeanour, or mal-practice," publicly justify them, and consider them parts of their virtue and their religion. Said Church did not call those facts a misdemeanour, or mal-practice, but state them to show the necessity, which those facts produced, for passing that vote, without impeaching the character of those, who are the objects of it, and leaving them to enjoy their own favorable opinion of those facts.

After the dismission of Dr. Holmes in the manner above mentioned, he and eight or nine persons, calling themselves "the Church," convened what they call "an advisory Council," and it is more particularly described in said "Account," &c. in the following words; "An Ecclesiastical Council was convened at the Old Court House in Cambridge, June 17th, 1829, by letters missive from the pastor and First Church of Christ in Cambridge, to give them advice and counsel, in their peculiar and trying circumstances."

The Result of said Council is long ; and there can be no sufficient reason for multiplying the copies of it, as the unrivalled industry of those, who obtained that result, and of their friends and supporters, has circulated it so extensively, that it is difficult to move in any direction, without observing copies of it, and finding that it has become one of the most familiar objects in the community. It is mentioned here, for the purpose of stating concisely a few of the principal objections, which the Parish makes to it, and of inviting a critical attention to it and a careful comparison of it with the contents of this pamphlet, that it may appear how far it is founded on the facts of this controversy, and the principles of law and substantial justice applicable to them, or how far it is diametrically opposed to them. Although it generally condemns the principles and proceedings of the Parish, and justifies and applauds the principles and conduct of Dr. Holmes and his adherents, instead of exciting any doubt in the majority of the Parish, if it has had any effect upon them, it has confirmed their opinion in the rectitude of their cause. Said objections to said result are the following :

1. Before the election of said "advisory Council," Dr. Holmes had been legally removed from his office of pastor in said Parish, by a vote of the Parish, pursuant to the result of the *ex parte* Ecclesiastical Council herein before mentioned, legally elected by the Committee of the Parish, for the purpose above mentioned.
2. Dr. Holmes at the time of the election of said "advisory Council," was not pastor of the Parish, and had no right to perform any act whatever as such.
3. The meeting of the Church, at which they made said election, was irregular ; and they had no legal right to elect such a Council.
4. The Church did not request the Parish to join in said election by them, in conformity to the principle of concurrence between the Church and Parish for which the Church contend.
5. The Church gave no notice to the Parish of said election by said Church.
6. Said "advisory Council" gave no notice to the Parish, and they, therefore, had no right to address that Council, even for the purpose of objecting to their jurisdiction, and they had no opportunity to give any evidence to that Council, or to be heard on any subject whatever.
7. Because many very important and material parts of the evidence given by the Parish before said *ex parte* Council, were wholly omitted before said "advisory Council," and the said result of the last mentioned Council was founded on a very partial and imperfect view of the facts, arguments, and principles included in the controversy.

8. Because the result of said "advisory Council" is opposed to many facts in the case, which admit of full proof.

9. Because several of the members of said "advisory Council" during its session, were absent at different times, while the other members thereof were proceeding in the hearing of the evidence; so that those members, who were so absent, did not hear several important parts of the evidence, which was offered.

10. Because said "advisory Council" in other respects, deviated from those rules of proceeding and those usages, which all tribunals, which undertake to hear, consider, and decide cases submitted to them, ought to observe.

The foregoing are a few of the objections by the Parish to the election of said "advisory Council," and to said result published by it. At some future, convenient time, the proceedings and result of said advisory Council will be more fully noticed.

NOTE.—On page 74, The statement of the evidence, which the Committee of the Parish offered to the *ex parte* Council to support the Complaint of the Parish against Dr. Holmes, should have commenced with the allegation, that 'All the forgoing papers, whereof copies are included in this pamphlet, excepting the address by a Committee of the Church to Dr. Holmes, on pages 48 and 49, were read in evidence to the Council.'

BX

9861

C





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 021 897 604 9